





## news

# Marchers leave Ulster in peace

DAVID McKITTRICK  
Ireland Correspondent

Northern Ireland breathed a collective sigh of relief yesterday as the last major weekend of the summer marching season passed off with only minor incidents rather than the widespread disturbances which had been feared.

In Londonderry, where a 10,000-strong Apprentice Boys parade had been the focus of most concern, there were only isolated confrontations with the RUC, or loyalists. A number of prominent local people, including the SDLP politician, Mark

The city had been braced for trouble as tensions rose in the wake of last month's protracted stand-off involving the Orange Order and the RUC at Drumcree, Co Armagh. In the event it was clear that both the Apprentice Boys and the nationalists, including Sinn Féin, were anxious to avoid trouble.

Durkin, stood for several hours at Butcher's Gate, in the historic city wall, to prevent youths from the Bogside district moving into the city centre.

Violence was mostly confined to isolated incidents on the fringes of the large procession, although there were also skirmishes in a number of towns arising from smaller parades.

An unusual feature in several places was that negotiations were held between Protestant marching organisations and Catholic residents.

The series of negotiations in Londonderry between the Apprentice Boys and local nationalists represented the first time that such channels were publicly opened.

In Belfast yesterday one of the main republican marches of the year passed off peacefully, when several thousand republicans walked down the Falls Road to the city centre.

The turning point in a tense weekend came at lunchtime on Saturday in Londonderry, when, after a lengthy meeting, leaders of the Apprentice Boys decided to abide by a government decision which banned them from a section of the walls overlooking the Bogside.

and heritage will not succeed. We will walk with dignity and pride, making this event the best ever. This association wishes to state our intention to walk these city walls at a time of our own choosing.

The decision to accept the ban defused tension. Mr Simpson was later praised by many sources for his part in the events of the day.

## SIGNIFICANT SHORTS

Five teenagers were killed yesterday when their car crashed into a water-filled dyke at Coral Beach caravan site, Inghindells, Lincolnshire.

Over 1,000 school inspections have been cancelled in the last year despite a recruitment drive to increase the number of teams bidding to do the work.

Railtrack was still clearing wreckage from the Watford train crash yesterday in an effort to open up at least two lines for commuter traffic today.

A British medical student killed in a volcanic eruption in the Philippines was enjoying his last long holiday before starting three years of intensive clinical work, his mother said yesterday.

A 35-year-old man has been charged with trying to make illegal exports to Iran after customs investigators seized a cargo of specialised steel used in making nuclear weapons.

The Department of Transport is the Government's heaviest user of private detectives and investigation companies, according to figures collated by a Labour MP.

A "passport for pets" is being considered by Labour to replace the quarantine laws, following pressure for reform from animal lovers and animal rights groups.

## Edinburgh celebration: On 50th anniversary organisers urged to embrace the sciences too

### Festival warned to re-assess or face decline

MARIANNE MACDONALD  
Arts Correspondent

The Edinburgh Festival was given a warning yesterday that in its 50th and most successful year it must re-evaluate its relevance or, like the arts in general, face decline.

Speaking at the first Edinburgh University Festival lecture, the American philosopher, Professor George Steiner, said: "To know when to stop is a rare but vivid mark of honesty with excellence."

In a speech containing a strong warning not to ignore the world of science, Professor Steiner said: "Too many worn-out ghosts of past or altered cultural ambitions and ideals litter the scene. It is precisely when it is still doing well, when it's box office is healthy, that an institution should draw a dangerous breath and ask of itself: 'Is my continued existence truly representative of my initial aims?'"

The Edinburgh Festival was created to provide a positive focus for post-war Britain in 1947 and to nurture international reconciliation. Half a century later it is an arts juggernaut, featuring hundreds of companies



Fired up: The band Towering Inferno burn a Star of David, launching a visual epic of post-Holocaust Europe at the festival. Photograph: Gerald Lewis

playing to more than a million people.

But it is failing to reflect the new dominance and influence of science. "Today, it is noon time, not in the arts but in the sciences," Professor Steiner

warned. "Whereas to a very major extent [the performance] of the arts festivals looks backward, science is, by very definition, in forward motion."

Such was the progress of this trend that he felt the coming of another Michelangelo, Shakespeare or Mozart was doubtful. But in the sciences, even a middling talent would find itself on an upward escalator.

"One would, in Renaissance Florence, have aspired to some personal contact with the painters and sculptors. In this late 20th century, many, very possibly a majority of the most gifted, work in the sciences. They harness the most concentrated, innovative, impulse

towards the future."

The past was becoming the territory of the arts. "The bitter quarrels between critical schools and movements in the humanities, the voluminous triviality of much that is produced in human letters, art history, musicology, point to a Byzantine afternoon - as do the jugglers' ingenuities of deconstruction and post-modernism. I have seen scientists stare, at lunacy, at the central deconstructive axiom that 'there is nothing outside the text'."

The Edinburgh Festival would ignore science at its peril, he continued. "The festivals of tomorrow cannot simply exclude what is most stylish,

most intellectually challenging and hopeful in our otherwise rather parous and often grey estate."

"One of the disabling weaknesses of current Western literature is its unwillingness, or inability, to engage with the dance of the spirit in the sciences. Music and the arts are equipped to do better. The native land of Watt and of Kelvin could give a lead."

The other direction the festival should follow was that of the workshop, the philosopher added. "It is the privilege of attending rehearsals for music, ballet, theatre, of watching a film crew or animation studio at work, which can make a fes-

tival memorable. The spirit of the age is, as pioneers such as Boulez have shown, that of the aleatory and the fragment, of the unfinished and of 'work in progress'."

Brian McMaster, director of the festival since 1992, said the problem with incorporating the sciences into the main festival was that he did not want to compete with the science festival which took place in Edinburgh in March. Nevertheless, he would consider Professor Steiner's suggestions. "He threw out many provocative thoughts, some of which I don't obviously agree with. Nevertheless, they were very constructive and challenging."

## Oasis fans don't look back

FROM PAGE 1

There were representatives of its bedrock constituency. Squads of young men in their twenties, their necks and bellies beginning to thicken with booze, poured out of hired transit vans as cheap as hire than minibuses. One group produced a sofa from the van, from which some continued drinking, while their mates brought out footballs. "I'm totally pissed," said one as he fell to the ground as if in validation of the band's laddishness.

Alongside them, members of the Grissini Tendency un-

loaded from Saabs and Volvos their M&S picnic of Parma ham with some salad, together with wine illicitly poured into orange juice cartons (no alcohol to be taken into the arena). They made their way along the two-mile route to and from the car park with much talk of rock with tunes, and comparisons with the Beatles.

Inside the arena they sat side by side somewhat gingerly at first, with delegates from the Tattooed Fraternity, who periodically staggered off to the fence, which had become the unofficial urinal, and proceed-

ed to urinate with one hand while drinking with the other.

As the disparate groups passed the afternoon in a gargantuan consumption of food and drink, the arena began slowly to resemble the kind of Third World rubbish dump from which rag-pickers make their living and whose inhabitants live constantly in danger of a visit from Mother Teresa.

At first the groups remained in disunity. "You're complete crap. Get off," shouted a rather respectable-looking young middle-aged man when The Prodigy, denizens of dance, took to

the stage immediately before Oasis. But as darkness fell, and the debris became invisible, the differences dissolved.

True, even then there was a residuum of disdain from long-standing fans who spoke earnestly about the early gigs in 1991. One die-hard looked condescendingly around the giant throng, saying: "In those days most of this lot thought Oasis was just a shop in Manchester where 'Boy George once worked', he sneered.

But the lights flashed on and his remarks were submerged in the roar.

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# Major challenged to disown the 'demon'



Dr Brian Mawhinney: ordered advertisements

COLIN BROWN  
Chief Political Correspondent

The Prime Minister last night was challenged by Labour to disown the "demon Blair" advertisements ordered by Conservative Party chairman, Dr Brian Mawhinney, portraying the Labour leader with Satan-like red eyes.

Tory MPs also privately said they were uneasy about the advertisements, which were attacked by Peter Mandelson, the head of Labour's election campaign, as some of the crudest negative campaigning ever seen in British politics.

The backlash against the advertisements may help Labour overcome the more serious damage caused by Clare Short's attack on the forces "in the dark" behind Mr Blair as Labour's old guard joined in her criticism. Ms Short's aides re-

jected reports that she would retire from politics over the row.

Mr Mandelson, believed to be a target for some of Ms Short's criticism of "spin doctors", warned that the campaign would backfire on the Tories.

"What little bit of good news they have had last week has gone to their heads and they have lost any sense of decency or judgement. It is vicious and nasty, and is final confirmation of the sort of negative campaign they are running."

"It will harden up attitudes of some of their own supporters, but the general public will be disgusted by it. I firmly believe it will backfire. We have seen two opinion polls showing that the New Labour New Danger campaign is pushing voters towards Labour. This advertisement will increase that trend."

Mr Mandelson said the Tory chairman had "overreached himself" with the "vicious and nasty" attack on Mr Blair aimed at exploiting Clare Short's outburst against his leadership.

He said Mr Major should disown the campaign ordered while he was on holiday from MC Saatchi, one of the Tories' advertising agencies.

"There has never been an advertisement of any sort of political communication like in Britain before now. Not even the Conservatives under Norman Tebbit would have dreamt of placing advertisements like this."

"It is something which the Prime Minister should condemn and take steps to stop as soon as he returns from holiday."

Labour Deputy Leader, John Prescott, said: "The Tory campaign of lies and vilification has now become utterly pathetic. A party that wastes millions

of pounds from secret sources on this sort of rubbish has no right to govern this country."

Mr Prescott has privately warned Mr Blair that he faces trouble ahead, unless he slows down the pace of policy change. Labour traditionalists joined in the criticism yesterday. Roy Hattersley, the former deputy leader, said in the *Observer*: "The genie is out of the bottle. No matter how hard he tries, Peter Mandelson - whom Clare would have done better to name - cannot squeeze him back... Labour needs to take this Grand Remonstrance seriously. Rightly or wrongly, Clare said what a lot of rank-and-file members are thinking."

Mr Hattersley, who is stepping down at the election, said Ms Short's greatest mistake was in denying there were policy differences with Mr Blair. "Clare, like me, believes people

on higher incomes should pay more tax in order to finance improved services for the disadvantaged. Blair does not."

Peter Shore, a former shadow Chancellor, said it was no good "pretending" the party was no longer interested in tax and redistribution of wealth.

Mr Shore said Labour's spin doctors were "wrong" to try to hurry the old Labour "tax and spend" image for fear of frightening voters.

Defence Secretary, Michael Portillo said: "Peter Shore's remark is another candid admission of the truth that we all know: that Labour stands for higher public spending and higher taxes."

"With each day that passes Labour's true agenda is laid increasingly bare, and the party is splitting into warring factions that no soundbite can hold together."



Devil in disguise? The latest Tory campaign

## Aromatherapists pour oils on troubled ailments

REBECCA FOWLER

Aromatherapy, once regarded as the preserve of cranks and "new-agers", has finally arrived in the mainstream and is becoming available on the NHS.

The Royal Liverpool University Hospital is the first to provide aromatherapy as part of a range of alternative treatments, underlining the fact that Britain has become the aromatherapy capital of the world.

As generations of exhausted men and women take to baths filled with lemon and tangerine, and are massaged with essence of jasmine and rose, sales of the oils have rocketed by 40 per cent in two years to £340m, according to the Office of National Statistics.

In Liverpool, nurses are providing aromatherapy services on the wards and in outpatient departments. It is used primarily to relieve tension before other treatments rather than a treatment in itself.

Among the most successful manufacturers is Aromatherapy Products Ltd of Hove, whose best-selling oils include lavender, used for skin conditions, relaxation and sleeping; rose, also a relaxant; and more recently Tea Tree from Australia, which has strong antiseptic qualities.

Alan Harris, managing director, said: "When we started we were only selling to the sandals brigade, but now aromatherapy has got a completely different audience. The new growing market is young males, who have started borrowing the products from their wives and partners' dressing tables. They're slowly becoming hooked too."

He added: "It ties in with people's current lifestyles, and the fact we've all become so much more conscious of the way we live our lives. We've become worried by what drugs we've used in the past, their side effects, and much more concerned about living healthy



Big business: Sales of the oils are now worth £340m a year

lives, using natural remedies, and getting rid of stress."

First used in ancient Greece and Egypt, aromatherapy became a forgotten art until a "Eureka-style" accident in the 1930s involving a French chemist called René-Maurice Gattefossé, who accidentally spilled lavender over a cut and found that the wound healed without a scar. Despite his discovery, however, it was not until the late 1970s that it began to achieve widespread popularity.

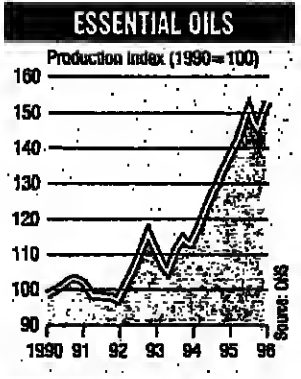
Mintel, the market research company, has produced a report on the success of aromatherapy. A spokesman said: "People are working a lot harder, so they are looking for other ways to relax, and this is something you can do at home that doesn't take

much time or preparation. It's almost becoming one of the essential things people buy."

The boom has also led to an increase in the number of aromatherapists, training in the use of the oils which are used for the treatment of ailments from rheumatism to insomnia and mental problems. The largest school is the Tisserand Institute of Aromatherapy, in Hammer-smith, west London, which runs £3,295 diploma courses.

When it started, eight years ago, there were only 11 students, compared to the current 150. There has also been a dramatic rise in the popularity of massage, one of the main ways in which the oils are administered. More than 12,000 people train for qualifications each year.

Judith Skynner, manager of the institute, said: "We get everyone applying from chemists and nurses to secretaries and people who work in the City. The UK has become the world centre for aromatherapy, and we also get students coming from everywhere... People are also more open to hands-on therapy. As life gets harder they need something to support their lifestyle. Life is mean and lean, and they don't feel cared for. It might be the only hour in their week where they allow themselves to relax, and that is completely for them."



Scent of success: 'People are working a lot harder, so they are looking for other ways to relax. This is something you can do at home that doesn't take much time' Photographs: Edward Webb

## Charity chief linked to the Moonies

LOUISE JURY

Concern over contacts between the chairman of a leading pro-family charity and the Moonies, are expected to be discussed at a meeting of trustees next week.

Professor Richard Whitfield, who is also head of a religious think-tank founded by the Duke of Edinburgh, alarmed the National Family Trust by attending a convention linked to the cult in Washington DC ten days ago. The charity, whose patrons include Sir Yehudi Menuhin, Sir Harry Secombe and Sir Cliff Richard, is dedicated to strengthening the family.

Trustees are understood to have expressed unhappiness over Professor Whitfield's contact with the Moonies, also known as the Unification Church, before and are expected to discuss his position when they meet. Although unwilling to discuss the case, Jan Owen, the trust's administrator, said: "There is some concern."

Professor Whitfield, 58, is thought likely to oppose any attempt to remove him from a post which has given him a public platform for his opinions on the family. As honorary chairman, he gave his support to a woman charged with, then cleared of, assaulting her nine-year-old daughter by hitting her with a slipper. He has opposed older fathers having children because they have few working years left to support them. And at a meeting of the right-wing Institute of Economic Affairs, he called on single mothers to give up their children for adoption.

The latest development follows his three stormy years as Warden of St George's House, an institution founded by the Duke of Edinburgh at Windsor Castle to act as a centre for training clergy and as a forum for discussing issues of concern to society.

Although its work has received much praise and high-level participation, Professor

Whitfield's time as warden has been marred by low staff morale, it has been claimed.

Three inquiries have been held into staff relations, but no action has been taken. In one carried out last year, an external investigator found: "(The Warden) is still not respected or trusted by most of the organisation and his management style, manner and personality create resentment and an unhealthy working atmosphere."

The investigator also noted Professor Whitfield was "seen as a bully who liked to 'pick out one individual', mostly women."

In the spring of last year, some staff expressed their lack of confidence in the Warden and embarrassment that the reputation of St George's House had been diminished by his words and actions.

More recently, one senior female member of staff was given legal opinion that she has a case for constructive dismissal because of Professor Whitfield's behaviour.

Professor Whitfield was yesterday unwilling to disrupt his holiday to discuss the claims. He said that he had been to America on "purely private business" and added: "You seem to have got hold of a range of half-truths. I've got no comment." A spokeswoman for the Duke of Edinburgh said that it was "entirely a matter for (the Warden)."




Sir Yehudi Menuhin: A patron of the National Family Trust

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Night life: The rush to floodlight public buildings and churches for the Millennium is worrying astronomers and romantics

# Light fantastic that will snuff out the stars

KAREN BAKKER

The stars in the night sky are vanishing, thanks to National Lottery funding for a string of high-powered lighting schemes which are turning the Milky Way into a memory.

The Millennium Commission has received a series of bids for grandiose outdoor lighting schemes. It has approved some and many more are in the pipeline. The structures to be lit up include bridges, docks, historic buildings, parks and large but unremarkable office blocks.

Professional and amateur astronomers, environmental groups and romantics who like to see the stars come out are increasingly concerned about the number and scale of such projects. They point out that the light from cities already brightens night skies up to 50 miles away.

Dr John Mason of the British Astronomical Association described such schemes as "wasteful and obtrusive". And according to Dr Chris Baddiley, of the UK Dark Skies Campaign which has written to the commission complaining about seven schemes, "light pollution is a serious problem". He cited a recent survey by the Institution of Environmental Health Officers which found that nearly 50 per cent of pollution complaints to officers concerned external lighting.

The Skyline lighting project in Croydon, south London, which has reached the final round for Millennium Com-



Town beacon: Croydon previews its Skyline project which is competing for lottery cash

mission funding, proposes to transform the environment after dark by lighting 39 buildings and running a massive projection show in the town centre. The plan, which awaits a final decision in October, will cost £6.8m. Croydon Borough Council said "the lighting industry as a whole is enthusiastic about the venture". But the light will spill into the Surrey countryside.

The Millennium Commission has already awarded £2.3m of lottery money for permanent floodlighting of more than 400 churches, many in rural areas, after a bid prepared with the assistance of the Lighting Industry Federation and administered by the Church Floodlighting Trust, a body with trustees from industry and church groups.

A further £40m has been granted to the Renaissance of Portsmouth Harbour project, which includes a laser light show, promenade lighting and extensive floodlighting of buildings, ships, and cranes. Lighting apparatus can spoil daytime views, and at night the stars and planets are obliterated by glare and "sky glow" caused by dust particles and water droplets in the atmosphere scattering rays as they rise from

the ground. Sky glow extends up to 50 miles beyond London. Dr Baddiley said that the light from towns blocks out 90 per cent of the stars for tens of millions of people.

The Council for the Protection of Rural England says that "dark, unlit landscapes and skies are one of the country's most precious resources," echoing the Government's 1995 Rural White Paper. But light is not officially recognised as a pollutant and there is no proper regulatory framework for it in Britain, and no recourse for those suffering from it. Often, no planning permission is required for lighting sports facilities and amenities.

Supporters of the new schemes hope to bring life to city centres at night, draw attention to impressive or historical buildings and reduce fear of crime. But the CPRE says lighting does not necessarily increase security, and cites Home Office Crime Prevention Unit studies which show it is not a significant deterrent to burglars. In fact, it says, in rural areas "introducing lighting can result in increased crime rates, enabling would-be burglars to find easy access points and creating dark shadowed areas for concealment".

The Institute of Lighting Engineers admits that "gratuitous" floodlighting often "swamps important architectural and historical installations", and wastes "not just electricity and thereby large sums of money, but more importantly, finite ener-



Light cheats the night: Britain at midnight in January, taken on a clear night by a United States meteorological satellite. Photograph: National Remote Sensing Centre, Farnborough

## Judiciary and police shun blacks over top jobs

JASON BENNETTO  
Crime Correspondent

Black people are failing to get senior jobs in the criminal justice system while a disproportionate number are ending up in jail despite years of equal opportunity initiatives, according to a report published today.

The higher echelons of the judiciary remain a white preserve, with no person from an ethnic minority as a high court judge, justices' clerk, or a chief probation officer. There is only one Asian or black officer in the police service above the rank of superintendent, and there are just five circuit judges, five prison employees at governor grades, 21 ushers and four senior lawyers at the Crown Pro-

The ethnic losers	
Profession	% Ethnic Minority - 1995
Judiciary	1.3
Magistrates	3.9
court staff	Not Known
Magistrates	7.5
CPs	1.75
Police	0.49
Prison governors	2.4
Prison officers	2.74
All other staff	7.6

British population. But the proportion of prisoners who are black has risen from 14 per cent in 1989 to 17 in 1994.

The report by the National Association of Probation Officers and the Association of Black Probation Officers, concludes: "The majority of criminal justice agencies appear still to fail to employ or promote suitably qualified black candidates."

Two exceptions are the Probation Service which has increased its ratio of ethnic minority employees to 7.6 per cent and the Crown Prosecution Service where the number has risen from 5.9 per cent in 1991 to 7.5 per cent in 1995, although this is only in the lower grades. The proportion of senior posts has actually dropped to 1.6 per cent.

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# Lebed flies in to halt Chechen carnage

## War hero faces daunting test

HELEN WOMACK  
Moscow

General Alexander Lebed, widely seen as the rising star of Russian politics, was facing his first big public test yesterday as he flew to the Caucasus to try to broker a ceasefire in the Chechen war.

The day after he was appointed President Boris Yeltsin's special envoy to the region, he flew to Dagestan, which borders on the war zone, to seek the advice of Muslim leaders. Interfax news agency said he might meet Chechen separatists in the Dagestan village of Khasavyurt.

The retired general, who performed so well in the first round of the presidential election that Mr Yeltsin made him his national security adviser, is seen by many Russians as a miracle worker who can end the 20-month agony in Chechnya. But it remains to be seen what initiatives he will offer.

General Lebed set off on his mission after a crisis meeting in the Kremlin with President Yeltsin and Viktor Chernomyrdin, who on Saturday was reconfirmed as Prime Minister by the Communist-dominated parliament.

Mr Yeltsin instructed Mr Chernomyrdin to investigate the "gross miscalculations" which allowed Chechen rebels to overrun the Chechen capital, Grozny, and ruin his inauguration last week. The Prime Minister then convened a meeting of Russia's State Commission on Chechnya. This decided that federal forces would have to be strengthened, although talks remain the ultimate goal.

On the ground, Russian troops were still struggling to expel the rebels from Grozny. Sergei Trofimov, of Tass news agency, who was among civilians trapped by fighting in the city centre, said federal forces had reached the besieged government building and had evacuated some wounded soldiers. "The blockade of central Grozny was broken through last night by units of interior troops and a motorised infantry regiment," he said.

However, fierce house-to-house fighting continued. The Russian military command admitted that up to 200 servicemen had been killed and 800 wounded since last Tuesday. There was no confirmation of a rebel claim that 150 Russian troops were killed in one incident alone yesterday, when their convoy was ambushed as it moved to relieve the town of Argun. Both sides exaggerate when speaking of each other's losses.

With Chechnya plunged into the worst violence since early 1995, immediately after Moscow sent tanks and troops to crush its separatist rebellion, all eyes were on General Lebed, the veteran of the Afghan war who won respect in Russia for stopping ethnic violence in the former Soviet republic of Moldova.

"Lebed is a military man, he is used to tackling these sorts of problems," Tass quoted Mr Chernomyrdin as saying. "I am sure that he will cope with his task. He simply must do this."

General Lebed has played his cards close to his chest since Mr Yeltsin appointed him on Saturday to replace his previous envoy to Chechnya. "Let's take a look at some kind of new solution, new approach," is all the general said.

Although there is a risk for General Lebed that his new political career could come to grief in Chechnya, he has, perhaps, a better chance than any other Russian leader of achieving something in the region, as he is not tainted by involvement in the war so far.

Indeed, he spoke against it from the very moment the former defence minister, Pavel Grachev, launched Moscow's military intervention.

General Lebed may choose to keep out of what will inevitably be the messy military clean-up in Grozny and concentrate on a wider solution. During his election campaign, he spoke of the possibility of Chechen independence if a referendum showed it was the will of the majority. Last week he suggested a conference involving all parties in the conflict.



Life goes on: A local woman walking past a burnt-out armoured troop carrier in the embattled Chechen capital

Photograph: AP

## Civilians caught in the heat of the Grozny cauldron

Carlotta Gall sees the plight of the people worst affected

It is the civilians who are in the worst plight. Up to 2,000 were queuing in a mile-long traffic jam, or tramping through the mud on the north-western road out of Grozny yesterday.

Russian soldiers were charging merrily to allow people out, up to £10 for a car full of people, one woman said, who had turned back, angry and tearful.

One old couple carrying their belongings in a plastic bag and a red bucket said their house had been destroyed for the third time. "How long will this go on?" the woman asked.

Some refugees waited eight hours on the road as the soldiers checked their documents, calling cars forward one by one with

a loud-hailer, while a sniper trained his sights on the approaching vehicle.

"We have been warned that fighters will try to break out this way," said the officer in charge. "We have to check every car; every man who could be a fighter we turn back."

The Russians looked exhausted and demoralised. Fresh bullet marks scarred one wall. "They hit us yesterday," said a soldier called Alexei, a hand-dama tied round his head. "One guy was wounded and we are all concussed."

The crash and rumble of heavy artillery sounded con-

stantly as Russian forces began a steady bombardment of the city centre as the heavy rain ceased. Just north of the centre mortars whistled overhead as machine-gun battles erupted around a large Russian command post.

Small groups of Chechen fighters moved among abandoned apartment blocks up to their positions just 200 yards from the compound, where they said, they had pinned down over one thousand Russian troops.

"There are two regiments which have anything from 600 to 1,000 men and a battalion of

200 in there," one said. "We have them completely surrounded; they cannot leave and no one can reach them."

The crack and whistle of a sniper rifle shot rang out. Both sides were sniping at each other from a distance of 200 yards. Occasionally they opened up with a machine-gun or lobbed shells at each other.

A fresh group of a dozen fighters arrived, climbing out of a small Zhiguli car, with rocket-propelled grenades and rifles. They set off on foot to relieve men on the forward positions, running across intersections to dodge sniper fire but otherwise

relaxed, even casual. The commander of the unit, who spoke on his walkie-talkie using the code name "Leopard", said they were about to set up a rocketless rifle on the roof of an abandoned five-storey apartment block and fire into the Russian compound.

The fighters' aim in this part of the city seems to be one of containment rather than attack, said one resident, Magomed, whose brother was among the fighters.

"They shoot at them to keep them pinned down and watch out to stop any reinforcement breaking through."

The Chechens had also isolated three Russian posts, ramshackle strongholds of concrete blocks and sandbags, on the northern road into this district. Between each post on the main road, armed Chechen fighters stood on street corners, milling with residents who started up a small bazaar.

Khesir Dalayev, driving a small truck back towards the centre, said he had brought three wounded fighters out under heavy shellfire the day before. After first aid, they took the wounded on to the neighbouring republic of Ingushetia, he said, just driving around the Russian posts.

"We can do anything we want here," he said, laughing.

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## Dole targets California as Kemp joins ticket

RUPERT CORNWELL  
San Diego

Exactly four years ago, someone took a poll of Republican delegates in Houston at the end of that miserable, mean-spirited convention. Who, it was asked, would they like as their nominee in 1996? The answer from these party activists was not Dan Quayle, Phil Gramm, Pat Buchanan, nor a luminary of the Bush Cabinet like Jim Baker or Dick Cheney. The conclusive winner was Jack Kemp. Now, at the 11th hour, Bob Dole has given them at least half a cup of satisfaction; the Republicans' eternal enemy terrible will have his best chance yet of national elective office as Mr Dole's running mate in November. In the process, Mr Dole might have improved his own chances.

It is a moot point whether a vice-presidential nominee attracts votes for his ticket. In the case of Al Gore four years ago, conceivably, but otherwise the evidence is thin. But if he can, then Mr Kemp is the man.

Oceano Colin Powell had removed himself from consideration, he was the only contender with both the ability to energize the party base, and the cross-party appeal to lure the independents and "soft" Democrats any Republican needs to win the White House. That stature, moreover, makes him a credible president, should anything happen to 73-year-old Mr Dole.

As a native Californian, Mr Kemp offers a glimmer of hope



Team mates: Bob Dole has brought Jack Kemp in from cold

in a state that alone carries a fifth of the 270 electoral college votes needed to win in November, but where President Clinton currently leads by 25 percent or more. Pro-life, but opposed to the sledgehammer of a constitutional amendment banning abortion completely, he finances the Republicans' most ferocious internal argument. Above all, he is a man of warmth, humanity and compassion from a party currently out-noted for these qualities.

Such assets, of course, carry a price. For Republicans, Mr Kemp is inspiring and infinitely forgivable - but infinitely maddening. Just five months ago, at the very moment Mr Dole was sealing his primary victory, Mr Kemp took a deck seat on the Titanic by endorsing his friend, Steve Forbes. Before

that, he had broken with party orthodoxy by coming out in support of affirmative action and dissenting with California's "proposition 187" on the 1994 mid-term ballot to deny all benefits for illegal immigrants. Mr Kemp, the word went out, was a loose cannon, and not a "team player." Indeed, two years before that, when Los Angeles was in flames and the Republicans were in one of their periodic law-and-order frenzies over the riots, Housing Secretary Kemp, as he then was, insisted that the solution lay not in "more police, more guns, or more prisons", but in aid for the inner cities, notably tax-exempt enterprise zones to lure jobs and hope back to the inner cities.

Hope. That, distilled into a single word, is the political message of Jack Kemp.

At 61 he belongs to the generation too young to have fought in World War II like Bob Dole, too old to have been entangled in Vietnam like Bill Clinton. His formative years were the 1950s and early 1960s, the heyday of the American Dream, when he was building a dazzling career in the National Football League. In 1970, the star quarterback with the San Diego Chargers and the Buffalo Bills turned New York Congressman and passionate "supply-sider", who believed tax cuts were the key to economic growth and national renewal.

So successfully did he convince Ronald Reagan of his cause that in 1988 Mr Kemp was widely regarded as the great man's natural heir. But his Presidential campaign that year was a flop, and his relations with George Bush such that his appointment as Housing Secretary was bewildering. Thereafter, Mr Kemp's voice was little heard.

Now, Mr Dole has indirectly made amends. It is an intriguing ticket - not least for the personal chemistry between two men, who are in many respects polar opposites.

But in a seemingly pre-ordained political season, Mr Dole has at last achieved a surprise. President Clinton, apparently expecting the personable but little-known Florida Senator, Connie Mack, is said to have been "shocked" by the choice of Mr Kemp. And, just possibly, a mite alarmed.

## TV spectacle turns delegates into props

JOHN CARLIN  
San Diego

Some 30,000 people gather today in San Diego for the start of the Republican Party convention, a four-day, made-for-television event designed to portray Bob Dole as a winning presidential candidate.

Half are representatives of the media. The delegates themselves, as the *New York Times* wrote last week, "seem like afterthoughts, or perhaps props". Or perhaps extras, whose main

function it will be to clap, cheer and create an image of frenzied solidarity around the show's unlikely star, the 73-year-old former senator from Kansas.

Orchestrating the spectacle, like a Hollywood director, is a political consultant by the name of Paul Manafort. Monitoring proceedings by video from a skybox, he will be in constant telephone communication with officials on the podium, firing down instructions to ensure Mr Dole and other leaders put their best TV faces forward.

The job of the media commentators will be to probe the glamorous facade and expose cracks in party unity. To forestall their efforts the convention's political organisers have been working hard behind the scenes in the last week to bury the biggest bone of Republican contention: abortion.

Half the delegates present belong to the militant Christian wing of the party. Led by Pat Buchanan, the fiery but failed presidential nominee, and Ralph Reed, executive director

of the Christian Coalition, they have made it clear they will brook no dissent. Any suggestion that the party is not squarely in the pro-life camp, they have indicated, would spur a full televised rebellion, no matter the consequences to the campaign.

Thus Mr Dole, who is so zealous on the abortion question, was persuaded last week to water down language suggesting tolerance for the pro-choice camp, to which most Republican voters happen to belong.

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Photograph: Al

# Canada draws line over cracks



What is being proposed is a 180-mpb service on new track, with the same technology used by the TGV high-speed trains in France. The travel times would be cut in half.

The same logic drives Mr. Bouchard, who wants to show an independent Quebec would still be a partner with the rest of Canada. He says, "I have even been leaning Mr. Chrétien about his lukewarm support for the TGV. "If I was the federalist prime minister," he joked recently, "I would want to prove to everyone that federalism is good. I would want to recreate the conditions that existed at the birth of federalism — the

There are also questions about how realistic it is to expect such an enormous outlay of government spending. "Can the government pay for projects like this when it is closing

**G**angs apparently organised by the ruling Muslim party and backed by police disrupted two rallies by opposition parties and forced the cancellation of a third, opposition leaders said. The rallies in Gradacac in northern Bosnia, and the eastern town of Tuzla, were called off to prevent violence, leaders of the United List for Bosnia said. In Gradacac, men wearing T-shirts with the ruling party for Democratic Action logo shouted through a loudspeaker as the rally began. In Tuzla, Alija Ismetovic, mayor of the government's second-largest city, Tuzla. A rally in Kalesija was similarly disrupted and the parties cancelled a rally planned in Celic. Opposition leaders accused President Alija Izetbegovic's ruling party of trying to intimidate voters before the 14 September national elections. **AP — Tuzla**

**A** 38-day hunger-strike by 10 Africans demanding the outright stay in France is putting the conservative government's tough anti-immigration policies to a test that human-rights groups fear could end in tragedy. Lying in sleeping-bags in Paris's Saint-Bernard church, the men, mostly Malians in their late 20s or early 30s, say they have nothing to lose and have vowed to keep on fasting to the end rather than return home to poverty. "If I get my documents (residence permit), I'll work like everyone else. If I don't, I die and that's all," Makam Diabate, 32, said. Their fast is the latest in a series of protests by 300 African *sans papiers* (without documents), including women and children, who face expulsion under 1993 laws pushed through by the hardline former interior minister Charles Pasqua to curb clandestine immigration. *Reuter - Paris*

**B**ulgaria's most revered psychic, Granny Vanga, whose prophetic powers won her admirers across the Balkans and beyond, died at the weekend aged 85. "Granny Vanga passed away ... after a four-year battle against cancer," Doctor Todor Eklarsky said from Sofia's former government hospital where she had been treated since 3 August. For decades Vanga drew visitors from around the world to her villa in the mountains of southern Bulgaria. Blind from childhood, she was venerated as a saint for her healing and clairvoyant powers. Her pronouncements, always religiously recorded, made her a kind of unofficial state oracle. Prominent Bulgarians ranging from the ousted Communist dictator Todor Zhivkov to exiled King Simeon II paid secret visits to Vanga seeking advice, according to local media. *Kater - Sofia*

**R**escue workers found the body of a six-year-old girl, bringing to 83 the number of people killed in the flood that devastated a Spanish campsite last week. For the fourth day running, workers searched for other possible victims of the flood that destroyed the Virgen de Las Nieves campsite just south of the French border. Rescue workers are still looking for at least three children and two women, believed to have been at the campsite. *AP—Biscaya*

# One dead in biker battle with Turkish Cypriots

Several demonstrators were hurt when Turkish forces occupying the northern third of the

President Yassuf Cerides has responded to the motorcyclists' demand to abort the protest, which aimed to dramatize the plight of the island, divided since the invasion of the north by Turkish forces in 1974. He said Turkey's occupation forces would use the challenge as a pretext to ignite a full-blown confrontation.

## Israeli schoolgirls turn assassin into pin-up

Her idol, it turned out, is not Michael Jackson, but Yigal Amir, the 26-year-old law student who assassinated Yitzhak Rabin, the Israeli Prime Minister, last year. Together with several of her school friends, she has set up a "Yigal Amir Fan Club" which writes to him in jail and collects clippings and

It is all very alarming for the nearly 50 per cent of Israelis who voted for Shimon Peres, Mr Rabin's successor, who was defeated in the May election. It confirms their suspicion that it was not just the wilder extremes of the Israeli right which approved of the assassination.

Demonstrators holding a vigil outside the Gross school in memory of Mr Rabin were abused by local residents who shouted: "Shulamit Aloni [a left-wing politician] is the next one. We will assassinate Shulamit Aloni." On one wall of the school was written: "Peres is next in line." Zevulun Hammer, the Education Minister, is to set up an inquiry into the "fan club", but is himself a leader of the far-right National Religious Party and unlikely to take stern measures against the school.

# Political exile finds new angle in Saxony

Kurt Biedenkopf, Prime Minister of Saxony, has declared war on Brussels and Bonn, shattering the illusion of consensus about the country's place in Europe. "Centralism is dangerous for Europe," Mr Biedenkopf proclaimed after announcing that he was taking the Commission to court.

You cannot get much closer to the problem of mass unemployment than running one of the so-called "new *Länder*", a job Mr Biedenkopf found himself in almost by accident six years ago. A former general secretary of the CDU and longtime rival of Mr Kohl, he was driven out of Bonn at the age

Kurt Beidenkopf

of 60 and took up a law professorship at Leipzig University shortly after reunification.

In elections in 1990 to the regional assembly, the local party was looking for a credible leader, and Mr Biedenkopf, a Wessi (former West German) with an American degree in political science but no Saxon links other than his fresh appointment at Leipzig, was the best the Christian Democrats had. He won easily, obliterating the Social Democrat opposition.

Much of this is down to King Kurt's tireless lobbying, and to the sweeteners that have so enraged the EC. Without the contribution from the Land, subsidised in turn by the west German taxpayer, Volkswagen had been poised to take its business to Hungary or Slovakia.

As Saxony's adopted son awaits his day in court, Chancellor Kohl must be pondering the wisdom of allowing his adversary to slip out of sight. After six years in the wilderness, "Kirk Kurt" is back, carrying the torch for the growing band of German Euro-sceptics.



### Kurt Beidenkopf: 'Centralism is dangerous for Europe'

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# After the marching, the waiting season



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Britain and Ireland are today experiencing what might be termed the relief of London-derry: a sense of thankfulness that the last major events of the marching season have passed with relatively little disturbance. Having just lived through some 2,600 loyalist parades and around 300 nationalist marches Northern Ireland can relax, just a little.

Next year will bring another marching season, but in the meantime a three-person committee – made up of an Oxford academic, a Presbyterian minister and a Catholic priest – will be grappling with the paradox issue and reporting to the Government. It may produce valuable suggestions.

To be blunt, it had better. This has been an awful summer for Northern Ireland, and strenuous efforts on both marches and other fronts will be required to avoid a further deterioration. Things had seemed bad enough with the breakdown of the IRA ceasefire and the murderous IRA bombings in the London Docklands and in Manchester. But last month's Drumcree stand-off has driven a sword between the two communities, severely damaged Anglo-Irish relations, and raised the most fundamental questions about Northern Ireland's viability as a society.

Although these latest marches passed off comparatively peacefully, tensions, anxieties and even dread experienced in the run-up to them

served as a reminder that it is a society which is never too far from the brink. In recent years a number of factors had increased confidence in its stability. These included a limited economic upturn, the potential for progress through the peace process, the increased professionalism of the Royal Ulster Constabulary and a strengthened London-Dublin relationship. Drumcree wrecked much of this.

Today the police candidly, though privately, admit that law and order did break down in that period and that the security forces simply could not cope. That sense of a society virtually out of control is profoundly damaging for economic prospects: big business will invest in a region suffering from terrorism but many turn away completely from a place where central authority is seen, even momentarily, to be lost.

This point was well put by Northern Ireland's leading business and commercial organisations, which recently combined to deliver a sombre warning: "The world thought that we had turned a corner. It has been shocked – indeed we have surprised ourselves – by the public display of animosity and bitterness. For Northern Ireland the moment of truth has arrived when it must decide whether it wants to be regarded as a credible, serious, first-division economic player or is prepared to accept relegation."

But one problem is that the leaders

of the Belfast brigade of the IRA, and the Orangemen who last month blocked hundreds of roads, can both, if unemployed, rely on Britain to cough up their dole money, as well as to continue to search for new investment. There is no perceived economic penalty for extremism.

There is no local political penalty either. There is no indication that David Trimble's Ulster Unionists will suffer at the polls for their identification with Drumcree: indeed, the chances are that their next vote will go up. Similarly Sinn Féin, which has played a cool, calculating hand in many

of the parading controversies, is currently on the crest of a wave.

The reduction of politics to geo-sectarian street manoeuvres has led many moderate Unionists to something close to despair. The closest thing they have to a political voice are probably the business organisations quoted above, but the business community has become almost completely detached from Unionist politics, and has only marginal influence on it.

The fact that there is also deep disillusionment throughout constitutional nationalism, north and south, is a factor which may significantly increase

instability. Non-violent nationalists were clearly collectively scandalised by Drumcree, which at a stroke all but shattered their confidence in the Government and the RUC.

At this moment the arguments within nationalism are being won by those who say Protestants will never accept Catholics as equals; that Unionism will never formulate a deal acceptable to nationalists; that the RUC will never be an acceptable police force; that Britain lacks the will or the means to deal with Orange mobs – in short, that Northern Ireland cannot be gradually reformed into a truly equal society.

It will be disastrous if these views harden from expressions of anger into settled conclusions. Nationalists will only be induced to shelve their aspiration to a united Ireland in return for a deal offering them equality and parity of esteem. If this is not on offer, then nationalism as a whole will conclude that Northern Ireland is, and will remain, an unjust entity. Such a communal judgement would give the IRA the moral cloud-cover for a fierce and protracted new campaign; the loyalist paramilitaries will reciprocate; and a new and terrible cycle will begin. The current poisonous atmosphere will provide plenty of recruits to the two equally futile causes.

There are few indications that the Government fully grasps the seriousness of the situation. Sir Patrick May-

hew looks tired, at a loss, and possibly demob-happy. John Major has devoted more time, energy and thought to Ireland than any prime minister since Gladstone and Lloyd George; sadly, his efforts have yet to receive their reward. He has many other items on his agenda, but he must continue to make Ireland an urgent priority. Otherwise he risks entering next year's general election with a rapidly worsening situation.

## An Oasis of bathos

Only the world of pop can offer such bathos. At Britain's biggest open-air concert, Noel Gallagher, songwriting genius of Oasis, managed to provoke contradictory shivers of self-abnegation and self-congratulation in the audience. "Is it worth the aggravation, to find yourself a job, when there's nothing worth working for," roared 125,000 voices in the celebration of nihilism which is talisman of the genre. Next minute, Gallagher was spurring them on to pride; simply by being there, he said, they had played their small part in a triumphant moment in history. But then the point of pop has always been to consecrate the mundane. And quite right too.

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

### Spying, spite and social cohesion

Sir Peter Lilley's encouragement for neighbours to inform on each other in the hope of reducing benefit fraud may achieve his objective but it will be at considerable cost, which he may not have fully understood. "Watching me, watching you", (6 August). I am concerned by the long-term consequences of undermining local social cohesion by encouraging spite, jealousy, hypocrisy, vindictiveness and snug self-righteousness.

After a decade of research on the informal economy in one locality, I would be the first to admit that fiddling takes place. However, I have been impressed by the innate decency and the sense of fair play among most of those who feel obliged to cheat in order to get a little extra money to kit their children out at school or not to lose face at a family function. When decent jobs offering fair rates of pay are available, the overwhelming majority of fiddlers are only too eager to stop their risky practices. There is now much other sociological research, mostly government funded, to support this.

There is, of course, a small minority of skilled criminals who systematically defraud the benefit system. It is in everyone's interest to apprehend such people. However, the price of the new measures is too high. There is a whole range of costs associated with a loss of social cohesion which reduces the solidarity on which much of our social and political life depends. People want decent jobs not indecent spying. Professor RAY PAHL, University of Essex

Sir: The biggest culprit in the great ongoing national benefits fraud (report, 6 August) is this Tory government. According to the Central Statistical Office, long-term unemployment stands at just under one million. This excludes about 1.2m who are not even attempting to seek employment any more.

The cost to this country in terms of loss of revenue through income tax and national insurance costs is enormous. The loss of human skills and sense of worth is even more galling. According to the Joseph Rowntree Foundation, since the Tories came to power in 1979 there has been a rapid increase in inequality in incomes in the UK. The setting up of a national benefits fraud hotline is symptomatic of the Government's abject failure in dealing with the issues of taxation, public spending and the future of the welfare state. DAVID CROMWELL, Southampton

Sir: To complement his "shop a neighbour" benefits fraud hotline, presumably Peter Lilley will soon be introducing a second hotline to enable us to shop all our neighbours who are employing the benefit fraudsters. Without the employers there could be no fraud. SARAH TURFF, King's Lynn, Norfolk

### Insurance moves

Sir: Today's announcement that insurers Refuge Group and United Friendly are to merge (9 August) is an example of British insurers facing up to the major transition which is taking place in the insurance market. The UK alone has seen the number of people employed in the



sales forces of insurance companies fall from about 220,000 in 1956 to around 80,000 this year with further falls anticipated.

It is also evident that the European market is now starting to experience many of the changes that the UK has been facing in recent years. The market overall is moving from being largely regulated to one that is highly competitive and deregulated.

In Europe, EU insurance directives now mean that insurance companies can sell their products in any other EU country. Also, there is growing competition from the banking industry and telemarketers. Many insurance companies on the Continent are beginning to wake up to the challenges that lie ahead of them. Therefore any potential lead that UK companies have in experience of exploiting the changing market will soon be eroded. Sadly, there are still too many insurers who have not invested in developing adequate plans and as a result many will fall by the wayside. Estimates vary, but, for example, there are only expected to be about 30 significant life assurance product providers by the turn of the century.

To succeed in the future, insurers must win on four battlegrounds: selecting markets, understanding customers, risk management and positioning to execute business strategies. As the market becomes more competitive and customers more demanding, insurers need to invest in new distribution and servicing systems and generally improve their overall offering. ROCCO SEGRET, General Manager, Insurance IBM EMEA, Feltham, Middlesex

### Competition and natural selection

Sir: I am delighted to see a digestible and coherent explanation of evolution aimed toward the uninitiated, but David Bodanis (The DIY University: "Evolution", 7 August) has risked misleading his readership on one or two important points.

First, Charles Darwin's autobiography makes clear that he had begun seriously to question his (previously absolute) religious faith by 1839, two years before the birth of his beloved daughter Annie, whose death was later to devastate him completely. As early as 1836 Darwin was unlikely to exist, given the contradictory nature of different faiths' religious teachings. Therefore it is not accurate to suggest that Annie's tragic death in 1839 either prompted him to reject the creator, or motivated him to formulate his theory of evolution by natural selection (he had essentially completed his development of the theory by 1839).

Second, David Bodanis is wrong when he says "... direct competition only rarely drives evolution". If natural selection is the driving force of adaptive evolution, then competition is the nourishment and inspiration of natural selection. Darwin reasoned that vast numbers of creatures come into existence to survive to reproduce; most die early and so the stage is set for competition. Those best adapted to their environment will necessarily have

an advantage in the struggle for existence. And whatever David Bodanis would have us believe, cheetahs form part of the environment of gazelles, and gazelles serve cheetahs similarly. Neither would have become adapted to anything like their present state without natural selection, and without direct competition for limited resources, natural selection is nothing. ROBERT HOWE, Skelburness, Cumbria

### Cost of flooding

Sir: The Yangtze floods again and a flash flood occurs in the Pyrenees ("Flash flood turns camping site into 'Dante's vision of hell'", 9 August) causing loss of life and devastation.

Demand for extension and reinforcement of embankments is the immediate reaction to flooding demanded by the public. It is the inevitable cause of higher river levels, swifter currents and transfer of sediment downstream further and faster than would occur in the natural river. Once constructed, embankments have to be extended and progressively raised; the river bed level rises in the embankment section, so that eventually, when failure occurs, a flood that would have been a minor disaster becomes a major calamity. In the meantime, the problem is transferred downstream where sediment is deposited nearer to the sea-face. Dam construction can give temporary relief, but reservoirs silt up and thus have a limited life,

while the effect upstream and downstream involves a complete change in ecology.

One approach is to do as little as possible and to adapt to the inevitable floods. The cost of dams and embankments could be spent instead on monitoring the evolution of the river basin and providing reasonably flood-proof housing, adapted from time to time to changes in the river basin. Minimum guidance of the river would be needed, but straight-jacketing must be avoided. The policy is attractive in many cases, but each river basin has its own problems, for example due to deforestation, population growth, mineral exploitation, agriculture and urban development.

Engineers have to try to educate planners and politicians, who are responsible to the public, about the nature of natural hazards and realistic ways of living with them. Emeritus Professor D M McDOWELL, Brighton, East Sussex

### Heroines without boundaries

Sir: The book of "heroines" (Letters, 9 August) I owned in my early teens (1945) included Grace Darling, Elizabeth Fry, Florence Nightingale, Marie Curie, Edith Cavell, Suzanne Lenglen, Rosita Forbes and Amy Johnson: no suffragettes, no actresses, writers or artists ... but no national boundaries. ANASTASIA HEALEY, Spalding, Lincolnshire

### Working hard to raise standards

Sir: I write in response to your article "New examination system set to boost A-level pass rate" (5 August). While wholeheartedly agreeing with proposals for improving standards in education and a more varied university application system, as a 17-year-old student expecting modular A-level results in both mathematics and economics this August, I find the criticism levied at standards in education unfair and disheartening. A-levels have been rendered easier by the modular retake option. Although, as your article states, any number of resits are theoretically possible, given the constraints of time combined with the serious pressures of other modules pending and the large quantity of relearning required for a successful resit, modular retakes are both impractical and often unsuccessful.

The whole point of the modular system was to provide greater motivation and allow pupils to succeed through their own dedication – not via lower thresholds. I and thousands of other pupils and teachers around the country have worked extremely hard all year towards the summer examinations and we do not expect our attainment to be denigrated by the annual round of cynicism. What is the point in examination boards spending money to increase levels of attainment only to turn round and refuse to accept that standards have risen? MATTHEW STORR, (aged 17), Louth, Lincolnshire

### Army guns blight Northumberland

Sir: In "Fighting Army over impact of the increase in shoot and soot" (6 August) Stephen Goodwin fails to draw attention to the impact on the whole Border region of these plans for "big guns". The transport links between Newcastle upon Tyne and Edinburgh are in urgent need of revitalisation. Tourism in this area is increasing but will be unable to reach its full potential if the infrastructure is not in place. The Army's plans have not taken their host community's needs into account.

Plans to transport these guns to Otterburn Ranges each time they are required, rather than to retain some artillery on site, will produce unacceptable and dangerous road conditions for other motorists, including tourist coaches. Current army convoys have led many tourists to avoid the Tyne and Wear conurbation (including the Metro Centre) by taking the A68 direct to Carter Bar. Those of us who live on Tyneside have to deal with army convoy traffic from the A1 to Byrness at present. The extra weight and size of the new vehicles will bring chaos and danger to those communities through which they pass.

Restoration of the Borders railway to the west is under consideration for commercial traffic, so perhaps Mr Gummer should consider a similar answer to the Otterburn question. This would restore the wonderful Border views seen from these roads to tourists and locals alike, without the need to crawl along at 15mph. JEAN E FRASER, Newcastle upon Tyne

Sir: One question whether Stephen Goodwin has ever visited the wider parts of Northumberland. How can the area of "rolling moorland" around Otterburn Ranges be thought to rival the sweep of Hadrian's Wall with its loughs and crags, or the hills and dales around the Cheviots? There is open public access to the moorland during the whole of the rambling season (15 April to 15 May) but few people take advantage of this. There are much greater attractions elsewhere in this lovely county, both inside and out of the national park. CAROL PLACKETT, Newcastle upon Tyne

### Adoption choice

Sir: An important part of the abortion debate has been overlooked. There is an alternative to the sterile stand-off between pro-choice and pro-life. It is that every mother with an unwanted pregnancy could be made aware of the potential benefits and availability of an effective adoption service. The foetus lives, the childless couples can parent, and what could have been a devastating experience for the mother can be turned round, with support, into something genuinely positive. As a doctor in the NHS I have worked in gynaecology clinics where adoption is rarely presented as a viable option, let alone a positive one.

The social situation has changed since the act of 1967. There is no longer such a stigma attached to teenage pregnancies, and there is now a desperate shortage of babies for adoption. In England and Wales in 1993 there were 157,846 abortions and in the same period 6,930 adoptions. It is estimated that one in 10 couples are infertile. We need to establish a pro-adoption attitude and not an anti-abortion one. Dr KATE O'KELLY, Petersfield, Hampshire



## essay

# An elephantine struggle

Just two years after seizing Congress, the Republican Party faces electoral disaster and may be torn in two. American politics has reached a turning point, says Godfrey Hodgson

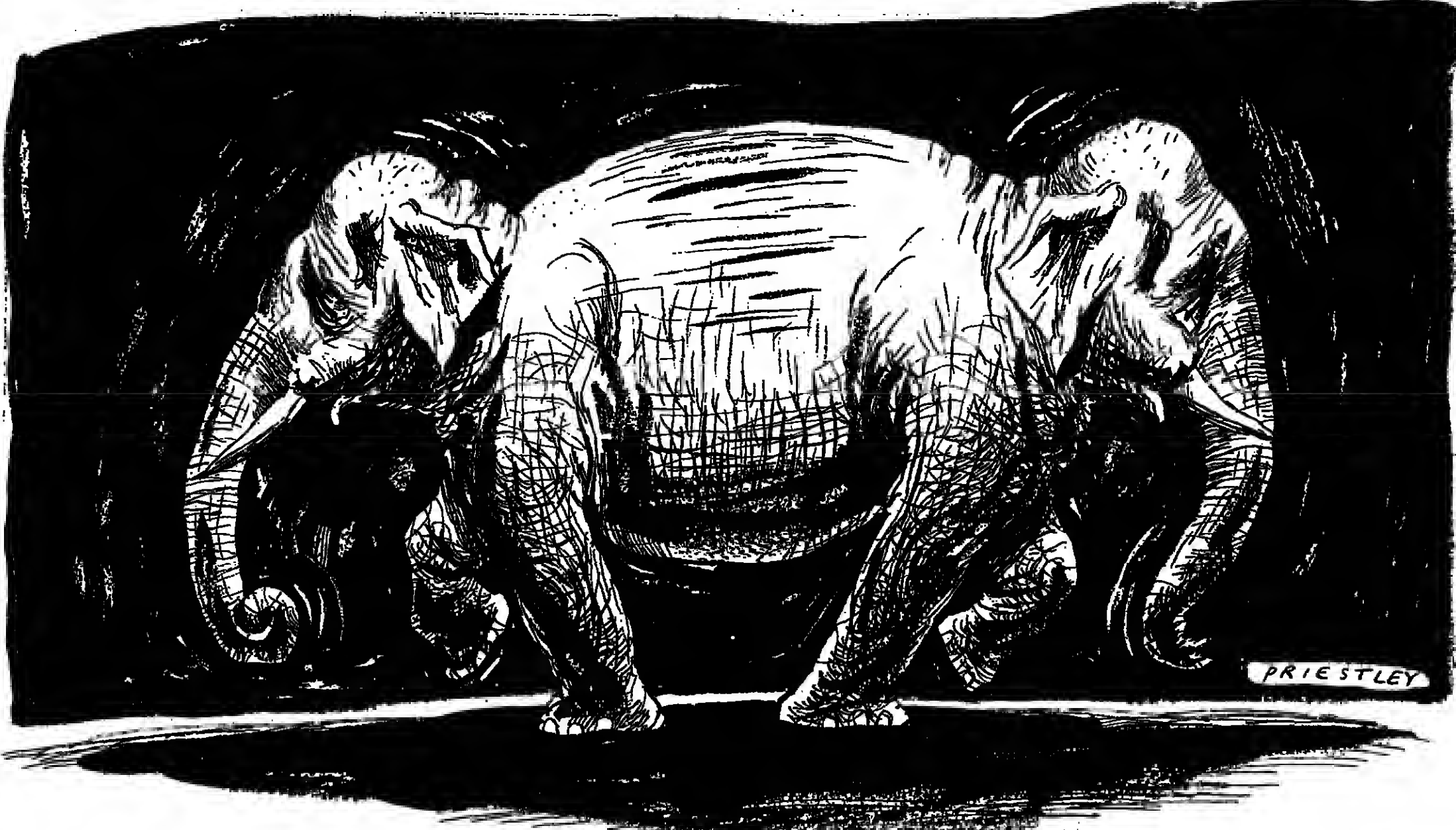
In San Diego this week Senator Bob Dole will be hoping against hope that he can save not only his own campaign for the presidency, but the Republican Party itself.

That is a dramatic turnaround. Less than two years ago, the Republicans swept into power in both houses of Congress. Now the Speaker of the House of Representatives, Newt Gingrich, the successful general behind those 1994 victories, is in eclipse since the public decided he was too much of an extremist. Senator Dole is far behind in the opinion polls. There is widespread speculation that if President Clinton is re-elected in November as easily as now looks likely, the Republican Party, the Grand Old Party, as it likes to call itself, will split into two.

To foreigners, that may seem almost unimaginable. The two big parties have acquired an almost official status. The Democratic donkey and the Republican elephant are almost as much a part of American mythology as the Statue of Liberty or Uncle Sam.

Yet in America, as elsewhere, political parties, while tough, are not immortal. And the Republican Party came into existence 140 years ago in circumstances meaningless to modern voters.

The political parties in America, a country that embraces change and worships modernity, have their roots in the struggle over slavery last century. In the past 30 years, largely as a result of the "second emancipation" of the 1960s, the ideological foundations of both the big parties have been challenged. They are trying to preserve their



unity in an age when their original basis in loyalties and interests means little to most Americans. Only the political class is interested in replacing those old quarrels with a new ideological divide between liberals and conservatives, and that, too, means little to many voters.

The Republican Party was born in Ripon, Wisconsin, in 1854. It was created out of fragments of older parties shattered by the great crisis over slavery which was to erupt into civil war seven years later. The North won the Civil War, and so did the Republicans. For the next three generations, from 1865 until 1932, they were always the natural, usually the actual, party of government in Washington.

The Republican Party was the party of Americans of native stock, farmers and businessmen large and small, from the Northeast and the Middle West. It was, above all, the Protestant party. Southern Democrats were Protestants, too, but they were bitterly divided from their

Northern brethren by the memory of the War between the States (as Southerners called it), the emancipation of the slaves and the unforgotten experience of Reconstruction, when the South was ruled as an occupied country by northern "carpetbaggers".

The Republicans were slow

**The party came into existence in circumstances meaningless to modern voters**

to notice that the United States was filling up with immigrants, most of whom were not Protestants. Most were Catholics from Ireland, Germany, Italy and Poland, some were later Jews. They gravitated into the Democratic Party, which the Republicans called

the party of "rum, Romanism and rebellion".

In the 1920s, after losing the presidency in 1912 because of a split between progressives and conservatives, the Republicans returned to power. So it was their misfortune to control the White House when the Great Depression hit. It was a catastrophic event. The gross national product fell by a half. A quarter of the working population was unemployed. In 1933, even the banking system had broken down. Unfairly, but remorselessly, people blamed the Republicans.

The consequences of that identification have lasted a long time. It allowed a Democrat president, Franklin Roosevelt, to usher in his New Deal, backed by a grand Democratic political coalition between conservative Southerners and the northern working-class, and to set out to cure the Great Depression (without much success, in truth - it was the Second World War that did the job) by introducing an American version of European-style social democracy.

From 1933 until the 1960s, few Republicans dared to attack the Democrats' New Deal. Only a minority of Republicans, mostly from the Middle and Far West, stuck defiantly to conservative principles. That split between eastern and western, moderate and conservative Republicans came to a head in the Goldwater campaign of 1964. Barry Goldwater, the champion of western conservatism, lost the election, but the conservatives won control of the Republican Party none the less. In 1968, under the semi-conservative Richard

Nixon, they woo the White House. Their return to power was interrupted by Watergate, but in 1980 they came back under a true conservative, Ronald Reagan.

By the 1980s and 1990s, the ancient quarrels in which the Republican Party was born had been forgotten. But they left one lasting legacy. The black political rebellion of the 1960s angered and disturbed many working-class voters who had always voted for the Democrats. By 1980 these "Reagan Democrats" were ready to vote for a conservative, even if he were a Republican.

In the South, meanwhile, another great block of Democrats was peeling away from the "Roosevelt coalition". Blacks - traditionally Republican supporters since that party won them freedom from slavery through the Civil War - began for the first time to vote in large numbers for the Democrats, who had passed the civil rights laws of the 1960s. The very fact that Southern state parties were attracting so many black voters made many whites there vote Republican, and gradually, in formerly one-party Democrat Southern states, Republicans began to take control. The consequences were momentous, for national and for Southern politics. Moderate Republicans in the North virtually disappeared. Conservative Republicans from the South tilted the balance of power inside the party to the right.

As late as the 1960s, there was no clear ideological split between the two great American parties. The Democrats were the party of the New Deal - but also of the conservative

South. The Republicans might be more conservative on balance, but in big cities and suburbs they elected plenty of moderates.

Now two parties confront one another, each with a clear ideological identity. The Republicans have become unmistakably the conservative

**Free-market conservatives and 'social' ones make unwieldy allies**

party. And the Democrats - even if President Clinton and his friends try to give themselves a centrist image and call themselves New Democrats - are still clearly identified with the defence of the liberal welfare state.

So why are the Republicans in trouble, perhaps even on the brink of a split? After all, surveys show that the majority of Americans think of themselves as conservatives. One answer is that the conservative movement which gave Newt Gingrich his landslide less than two years ago is now deeply divided. The Republican elephant, once symbol of all that was sturdy and reliable in American life, has become a push-me, pull-you.

To defeat the hated liberals, libertarians conservatives who believed above all in free-market capitalism formed an alliance with "social" conservatives, believers in religion, the

family and traditional values. It was always likely to prove an unwieldy alliance between two sets of often-clashing values. The present fierce conflict over abortion is one example.

Reagan made a mistake when he assumed that, just because people wanted to pay lower taxes, they would be happy with fewer government services. Gingrich made one when he interpreted widespread cynicism about politicians as support for his ultra-conservative Contract with America.

Still, to focus on conservative divisions and conservative mistakes may be to miss the point. Any system in which the Democrats can triumph in 1992, the Republicans in 1994, only for the Republicans to be faced with oblivion in 1996, is volatile to say the least.

In 1972, the political commentator David Broder wrote a thoughtful book called *The Party's Over*, in which he predicted the collapse of the two traditional parties. When the Republicans under Ronald Reagan won the White House, it was fashionable to say Broder had got it wrong: the Democratic Party was over, but not the Republicans. Now it is plain that both are in trouble.

One reason is television. Television in two forms rules American politics: paid TV advertising and unpaid TV reporting. In coming to rely too heavily on paid political ads, American politicians made a Faustian deal with the little screen. It was easier to keep track of a socially and geographically mobile population by abandoning organisation and relying on television advertising instead to communicate with

the voters. Now three-quarters of the (exorbitant) cost of American election campaigns goes on increasingly negative advertising. In the past, it has proven highly effective. But now there are signs that viewers are being turned off.

As for TV news, the broadcasters, once obsessed with politics, are looking for the impatient new multichannel-surfing viewers are bored by politics and politicians. They are more interested in sport and infotainment. Serious political reporting is being pushed into ghetto slots outside prime time.

There is perhaps an even more fundamental reason. For 20 years Republican politicians and conservative intellectuals have lagged off government, portraying it as at best unable to tackle society's problems, at worst a threat to the liberty of the individual. Frightened Democratic politicians - like New Labour in Britain - have all but given up defending the usefulness of government intervention. It would hardly be surprising if the voters believed them. And if government is so bad, why should they take much interest in who runs it?

Interest in third-party candidates like Ross Perot is surprisingly high - not because the voters like their policies, but because they are mavericks who are seen to stand outside the established political set-up. There is a pervasive mood that sees politics as no more than a cynical game, which chooses office-holders but does not solve problems. That is why the crisis in party politics is a challenge not only for Bob Dole but for Bill Clinton, too.

## HOLD THE FRONT PAGE!



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## Miles Kington is certainly not on holiday

I would like to correct a gross factual error made in the *Independent* last week. The error was made at the bottom of this page, in a statement which said: "Miles Kington is on holiday." This was not true. Miles Kington was gearing himself up to go to the Edinburgh Festival to take part in a show on the Fringe, and anything less like a holiday cannot be imagined.

Normally when you go on holiday, you pack a car with beach clothes, cameras, tennis rackets and so on. The stuff I was putting in my car included a hat stand, a deerstalker, a pedestal, a bust of Tchaikovsky, a euphonium, an electric piano, two bentwood chairs, an oriental rug...

You need a roof rack for a load like this. So before departure I went to my local Saab dealer and ordered a roof rack. I tried to buy one on the spot, but the model I needed was not in stock.

"We had one till yesterday," said the man called Steve (I knew he was called Steve because he had a lapel badge saying so, even though I got the impression that he might

have punched my nose if I had addressed him as Steve), "but a bloke came in and bought it yesterday."

Are sales staff taught to say this? To cover up for the fact that they haven't had one in for weeks, do they always say it went yesterday?

"How soon can you get another one?" I said, with the sinking feeling that always accompanies that question.

"Well, it's got to come from Sweden," said the man called Steve, scratching his head, "so it's going to take a couple of days."

A couple of days! I have known it taking a couple of weeks to get things from Sweden, and that's only 20 miles away. In future, I'm going to order everything from Sweden.

"Tell you what," said Steve, "why don't you buy one of those things?"

I can't remember what they are called, but he was pointing at one of those coffin-like things which you sometimes see on top of roof racks, like huge slugs or sarcophagi. I always imagined they were used for transporting skulls, or



Miles Kington

inflatable dinghies, or relations who pegged out while on holiday in France - specialised objects like that.

"I don't think it would hold all the things I have to take to Edinburgh," I said.

"What do you have to take?" said Steve.

"Well, among other things, a euphonium, a hat stand, a pedestal, a bust of Tchaikovsky, an electric piano, two bentwood chairs, a deerstalker, an oriental rug..."

He looked at me with the respect you give to someone you have suddenly realised is mad, and agreed that the coffin thing would probably not be big enough.

"Do many people buy

them?" I asked. "These coffin things?"

"We've had that one over a year," said Steve, very honestly I thought, "and not got near selling it, but I thought I'd have a go with you anyway. Right, one roof rack from Sweden coming up by Friday."

Driving home, I realised that I might need cover for all these things. I had a sudden flashback to the first time I drove up to the Edinburgh Festival, with a double bass on top of the roof rack. The double bass cover was rather thin. We ran into a storm in the Lake District. I still remember getting soaking wet, standing outside in the rain, holding an umbrella over the double bass and having no cover myself...

So I drove into a splendid builder's yard called Gay's of Holt and asked for a large sheet of polythene.

"For damp course work, is it?" he asked.

"No. It's for covering up stuff on a roof rack."

"Ah. What sort of stuff?"

"Well, I'm taking some things to Edinburgh, including an electric piano, a hat stand,

a euphonium, two chairs...

"Might I inquire what this is for?" said the builder, who obviously found it an exotic change from damp course work.

"I'm going to the Fringe with a two-man show called *The Death of Tchaikovsky* - a Sherlock Holmes Mystery, and these are the props."

"Fair enough," said the man. "I'll give you our smallest damp course membrane, then. That should do the trick."

The point I'm trying to make is that considering all this was just part of loading the car - and I haven't even mentioned the rehearsing, rewriting, poster-printing and practising that is also necessary to get on the road to the Fringe - I do not really consider that I was on holiday last week. But I am in Edinburgh now, and the show is up and running, and last night's audience was a bit bigger than the night before, and the sun is out, and I am starting to relax very slightly. In fact, as time goes on, I might consider putting "Miles Kington is on holiday" below this column, even while I'm writing it.



## the commentators

# Music in crisis? Not at the Albert Hall

Overweening stars, falling sales of CDs, funding cuts ... but at least the Proms strike the right note

The best antidote to Norman Lebrecht's recent pessimistic book about the future of classical music, *When the Music Stops*, is to go to the Proms. On many nights during the eight-week season, which runs from late July to the middle of September, the Albert Hall in London is full to the rafters, which means an audience of 5,400. This year I have been to three and each packed out.

Elsewhere, concert attendances are declining and sales of classical music CDs are down. Partly this is because the boost given to sales of recorded music by the switch to compact discs has run its course. Music lovers are now inundated by an over-supply of good versions of popular classics and rarities alike. It is also argued that because the traditional form of the concert in the traditional concert hall is stuffy, concert goers have become middle-aged. Meanwhile non-commercial funding is harder to find. Governments are cutting back and corporate sponsors can think of other things to do.

To these adverse trends, Mr Lebrecht adds a serious charge: the classical music business is being ruined

by greed. His book's subtitle is "Managers, Maestros and the Corporate Murder of Classical Music". There are many causes for the crunch, he writes, but at the core is a star system "that has been allowed to run amok".

The Three Tenors earn millions of pounds singing in amplified arenas while opera houses carry through redundancy programmes. Good artists undertake so many engagements, ceaselessly travelling the world, that their performances lose their lustre - until finally the public begins to notice and desert. Even worse, certain bookings reflect complex deals between agents and promoters rather than star merit - in the package with the star soprano, for instance, comes a mediocre tenor.

Mr Lebrecht's evidence is more convincing than his thesis. When he says that greed and fear have become the leading motives of an art in crisis he is describing the two emotions that permeate all business activities. When he asks whether agents would be needed if merit alone were rewarded, he fails to recognise that business can only be conducted by business people. The



ANDREAS WHITTAM SMITH

gifted singer is not different from the gifted engineer - both need the entrepreneur to create the market. Doubtless there is corruption and anti-competitive practices in parts of the music industry, but no business sector is completely clean. However the music industry appears sufficiently open to new entrants - whether artists or composers, venues, recording companies or entrepreneurs - to keep it more or less healthy and thus in equilibrium. The present downturn is an adjustment, nothing worse. As a consumer, I am delighted by the richness of what is on offer and constantly impressed by how minority tastes are served by live and recorded music-making.

The Proms show one way forward.

The most important reason for the Prom's success is the promenade principle itself. The fact that there is room for 200 people who pay £3 to stand (or sit on the floor!) in the space immediately in front of the platform, where the best seats would normally be, completely changes the experience. When the orchestra arrives on the stage, it confronts a crowd of enthusiasts so close to the conductor that the maestro and the promoters often exchange a few words. Contrast this with the normal arrangement in which the musicians look across to seats full of businessmen and their wives, guests of the companies sponsoring the event. William Christie, who brought his French orchestra and singers, Les Arts Florissants, to do Handel's *Semestra* last Monday evening, remarked how unusual it was to be greeted by smiles as he walked to the podium.

The audience at the Proms is conscious of itself as being special. Perhaps this is because three venerable institutions are involved: the Albert Hall in its Victorian self-confidence; the Proms themselves in their 102nd season; and the BBC as beneficent and

enlightened organiser. The audience is 10 years younger than average. There are little things you notice, too. The hall is not darkened during performances and the place is so informal - except on the platform - that a friend who had put a tie on one evening because it was opera looked a bit overdressed. The audience is at once unusually still during performance, listening with rapt attention, and noisily generous in its applause.

The result is that the best musicians in the world will come to perform without being paid a fortune. You sense the Proms audience drawing the best out of them. The Berlin Philharmonic conducted by Claudio Abbado, for instance, will play the end of this month when it would normally be at the Salzburg Festival earning much higher fees.

Mr Lebrecht writes that "the moral foundations of music - the inherent democracy of a lovely noise that can be admired by all, regardless of status or education - has been thoughtlessly abandoned". Not in London, not at the Albert Hall, not when the Proms are being run so brilliantly by the BBC.

# Edward Heath sees bright side of the Moonies

Andrew Brown on the strange case of the ex-PM and the religious sect

People are being beastly about Sir Edward Heath again, and for once it is not his opinions but his enviable collection of hankies that is at the root of the matter.

Last week he spoke at a conference sponsored by the Moonies, or the Unification Church as they prefer to be known. For a 20-minute speech on family values in the 21st century he was paid £35,000. The fee is not as generous as it may seem, though: the recipient must not only deliver his own speech, but sit through two days of other people's speeches on the same subject.

But was it enough to justify an association with the Moonies? Sir Edward has been ferociously attacked for "lending respectability" to the sect. The term "Moonie" has entered the language as meaning a brainwashed, bright-eyed zombie. All the natural instincts of the British are repelled by the thought of lending support to something as once so ridiculous and sinister.

Sun Myung Moon, the founder and leader of the sect, was hanged last year from Britain by Michael Howard on the grounds that his presence "would not be conducive to the public good".

None of this seems to bother Sir Edward at all: last week's performance was his fourth at a Moonie-sponsored conference. Nor does it bother many of his fellow on the Johnnie World Statesmen (retired) circuit. From Al Haig to Albert Reynolds, many of his peers have been happy to deliver platitudes for large sums at conferences organised by the Moonies.

I think they are quite right to do so (and not just because I once benefited from a Moonie freebie when I worked on the *Spectator*). Apart from the general presumption of innocence which must attach to anyone whom Michael Howard chooses to bully, there are other reasons for regarding Moonie and his followers as harmless. Admittedly, their beliefs, so far as they can be understood, are wacky, but that is no reason for cutting them off from society. Sun Myung Moon thinks he is the Messiah; Sir Edward thinks he was a great Prime Minister. Why is one and not the other regarded as insane?

By the standards of Korean religion, Moon is not that wacky at all. South Korea is probably the home of more and wackier religions than any-

where outside the United States, and many are huge by Western standards - Paul Yonggi Cho, a Korean Presbyterian who performed at Wembley Arena last year, claims to have a congregation of 750,000 at his Seoul church. Mr Moon does not, so far as I know, promise that his followers will become miraculously prosperous if they give him money, as many Pentecostal preachers do.

He does not promise his followers that God will save a family member of the donor's choice from everlasting damnation for a small consideration, as Morris Cerullo has done. No doubt the Moonies have caused harm to some of their members and brought misery to some families - though the definitive study of their organ-

Religions go mad and sour and explode if they are ostracised

isation found that 98 per cent of those converted left within two years. "The really surprising thing is how unshocking most of their morality is," says William Shaw, a broadcaster who spent a year infiltrating cults and is currently presenting the Cult Fiction series on BBC Radio Five Live. "Most Moonies embrace a morality which would make them acceptable in the most genteel Anglican social."

But that still leaves open the question of how best to deal with the destructive tendencies that can emerge in any religion. And here, I believe, Sir Edward has a message for the world.

The religions which go mad and sour are not those which are irrational, but those whose organising tendencies are not constantly checked and balanced by contact with the mess and disorder of the world outside. Ostracising them will only encourage them to shrink into a tiny self-contained hate-filled world that finally explodes, like the Aum Shinrikyo cult in Tokyo. And who better to remind the Moonies that they might be boring, ridiculous and irrelevant than the Johnnie World Statesmen (retired) like Sir Edward? Unless perhaps Michael Howard were available.

# Pregnant with confusion

Two cases have revealed abortion as an issue we've never come close to resolving, writes Pat Walsh

So now a woman has conceived eight children and is determined to have them all, whatever the cost. The conundrum the case will probably cause is a curious mirror to the one publicised last week. In that, a pregnant woman decided to abort one of her healthy twins on the grounds that she could not cope with bringing up both. And just as the earlier case posed some awkward questions for those who favour abortion, so the case of Mandy Allwood will put those who oppose it on the defensive.

The case of the woman who only wanted one of her twins threw into confusion the comfortable assumption that, as a society, we have the abortion issue under control. It brought us up against the fact that abortion on demand, even of perfectly healthy foetuses, is now largely available in the UK, and that in such a situation arbitrary decisions will be made.

For all but the most extreme pro-choice triumphalists, that is a disconcerting thought - particularly for those who would support a woman's right to choose in the belief that most decisions to abort are taken seriously and for justifiable reasons. In exposing the inconsistencies of the liberal position on abortion, the case has threatened to re-open the whole abortion question, thought by most to be long settled. It has certainly required those who adopt a pro-choice position to explain why so many non-dogmatic people feel repugnance at the idea that a perfectly healthy life can be ended purely for social reasons.

In the latest case, Allwood, apparently to her great delight, has conceived eight children as a result of fertility treatment. Her doctors are advising that, since no one has yet given birth successfully to such a large number of babies, she should opt for the selective abortion of most of her foetuses to ensure the healthy delivery of some of them. This advice is accompanied by warnings about the risks to herself as well as the likelihood

of severe mental handicap for any child who survives. So far, Allwood appears to be ignoring medical opinion and is determined to go ahead with the pregnancy without selective abortion. Many people may admire the courage of someone who, despite the odds, seems willing to risk everything to bring her children into the world. But there are aspects of her behaviour that are rather difficult to admire.

Questions will undoubtedly be raised about the sense of responsibility of someone who, while undergoing fertility treatment, is advised not to engage in sexual intercourse because she is producing too many eggs, and goes ahead and does it. Her more-or-less immediate involvement with the FRAX Max Clinic, who think she could secure a £1m deal, also leaves something of a bad taste. But despite the unedifying details of this case, it raises a similar question: is it morally acceptable to abort some healthy foetuses in order to ensure the survival of others?

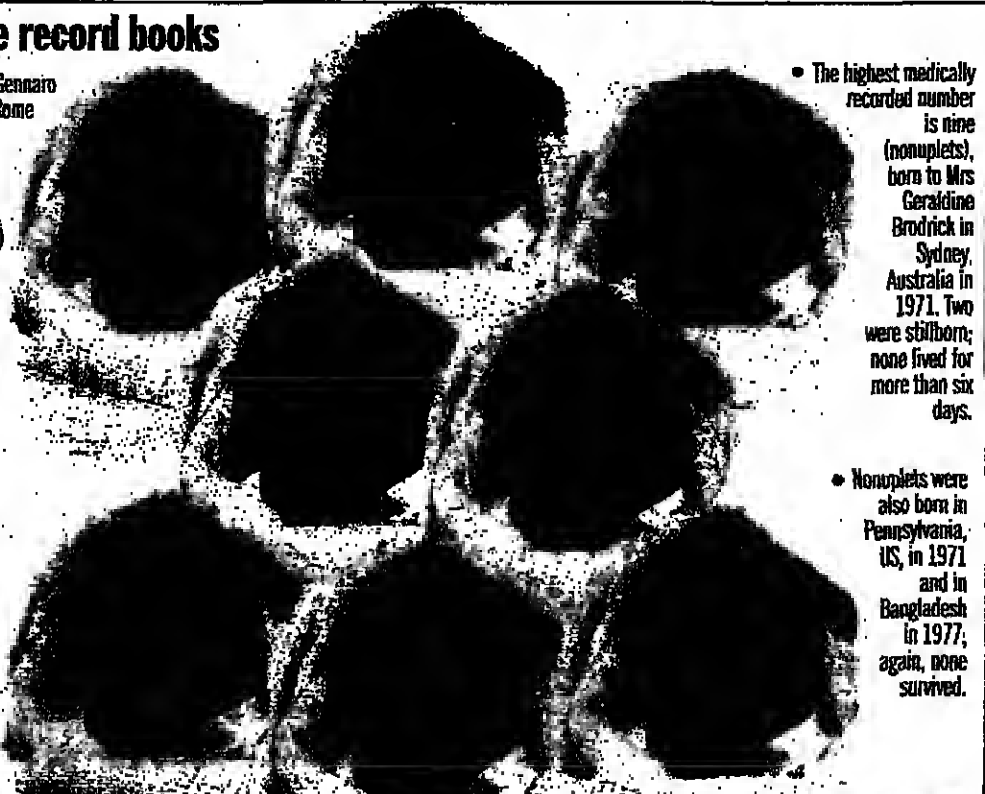
The confusing thing about it is that while choosing the death of a healthy foetus looked wrong in the one case, the selective abortion of more than one - in fact up to six - in the other case merely looks like the sensible thing to do. Why do we have intuitively different reactions to the two?

It might be argued that the differ-

## Into the record books

• In 1971 Dr Gennaro Montanino of Rome removed the foetuses of 10 girls and five boys (quintuplets) from the womb of a housewife, aged 35, after four months of pregnancy. The woman had been taking a fertility drug.

• The British record is seven (septuplets), four boys and three girls, born to Mrs Susan Halton in Liverpool in 1987. None survived.



• The highest medically recorded number is nine (nonuplets), born to Mrs Geraldine Brodrick in Sydney, Australia in 1971. Two were stillborn; none lived for more than six days.

• Nonuplets were also born in Pennsylvania, US, in 1971 and in Bangladesh in 1977, again, none survived.

From *The Guinness Book of Records 1996*.

But are matters so clear? Pro-life groups claim that the judgement that it would be medically unsafe to proceed with the pregnancy involving eight foetuses is itself value-laden. It is, they say, the response of a medical profession which for the most part is

wood, they say, should put herself in the hands of a pro-life doctor who would try to ensure the healthy delivery of all of her babies. If that failed, nature would take its course in aborting some of them.

The question of medical fact is crucial. If it is not strictly true that selective abortion is required to safeguard Allwood's pregnancy, then the argument for selective abortion in her case looks just as arbitrary as it does in the case of the aborted twin. If it is true that all the babies will die, before during or shortly after birth, then there is a real difference. The trouble is that if there is a fact in the matter here, no one appears to know it.

And even if the pro-lifers are correct about the medical facts, their own position is far from unassailable. It appears no more completely thought out than is the position of the pro-choice camp. For example, pro-life groups are not against fertility treatment in principle, at least

where it involves natural methods of conception, but should they not in all consistency be opposed to it because of the consequences it can produce?

The pro-life position here is not morally unproblematic. Suppose Allwood goes ahead with her pregnancy against medical opinion. Why is the fact that she will almost inevitably miscarry some if not all of her children be less of a tragedy than losing them through selective abortion? What should be done if her life and the lives of all of her children are put at risk or seriously damaged by mental handicap? To that question the pro-life camp appears to have no ethically acceptable answer.

But then ethically acceptable answers are in short supply on the question of abortion. In the short-term, society may be happier with that confusion. But in the long-term, will that suffice?

The author is director of the Centre for Medical Ethics at King's College London.

The trouble is that if there is a fact in the matter here, no one appears to know it

ence is this: the abortion of a healthy twin was made because of social considerations, while a decision to abort the Allwood babies would be made on medical grounds. If that is the explanation, those who are pro-choice in serious cases but uneasy about selective abortion for purely social reasons can rest assured in the Allwood case, because it would appear that there are good medical grounds there.

convicted already of the acceptability of abortion as a medical procedure. The medical profession, they argue, seems to believe that any pregnancy is detrimental to the mother's health compared with not being pregnant; with that premise the existing law is tantamount to abortion on demand - which, whatever might be thought now, was not the intention of Parliament when the law was passed. All-

THE CENTRAL FACTS FROM THE COURSES YOU ALWAYS MEANT TO TAKE, IN 25 LECTURES

"We no longer understand architecture," thundered Nietzsche in his essay "Human, All-too-human". The Prussian philosopher went on to explain: "An atmosphere of insupportable meaningfulness hung about an ancient building [he is thinking of a Greek temple] like a magic veil. Beauty entered the system only secondarily, without impairing the basic feeling of uncanny sublimity, of sanctification by magic or the gods' nearness. At most, beauty tempered the dread - but this dread was the prerequisite."

Hitler was fond of quoting Nietzsche. Philosopher and Führer both believed in the elemental power of classical architecture. Neither responded to classicism's cardinal virtues when chastely described as "form, proportion and symmetry", yet they thrilled to what Schopenhauer - correcting Italian Renaissance theorists - had re-labelled "gravity, rigidity and cohesion". For Germans, the classical language of architecture was indeed composed of grave and rigid orders, designed to be obeyed at all times, no matter how dreadful the message they conveyed.

Although it is easy to associate the revival of archaeologically correct architecture this century with Hitler and his pet architect Albert Speer, similar designs, based on

Greek and Roman archetypes, were popular in the United States at the same time, and Franklin Delano Roosevelt was no National Socialist. The fact is that classical architecture has echoed down the centuries, with different generations and cultures finding it an appropriate way of representing their political, civic and cultural ambitions. Today, however, architects in Europe and the US struggle unconqueringly to build in classical styles; unconvincing because there is little meaning in their monuments beyond nostalgia and a desire to curry favour with princes.

The first Greek temple in the Doric style, one of the three principal classical orders (the others are Ionic and Corinthian - or so the first-century architect Vitruvius tells us), was built by Dorus, son of King Hellen and the nymph Phthia, at Argos in honour of Juno. It was a representation in stone on one of the laurel groves that, until then, were used for bloody sacrifices and to display the decapitated heads of vanquished enemies along with skulls of bulls and other horrors.

Over time, these grisly souvenirs were incorporated into stone buildings and their likenesses carved by masons. Thus the dreadfulness of the Greek temple and classical architec-



Week 2 Day 1

## Classical Architecture

LECTURER: Jonathan Glancey

*A final examination will be set at the end of term.*  
*All graduates will be awarded a diploma and the best results will receive a year's subscription to the Independent*



ture as understood by Nietzsche, Schopenhauer and Hitler. Today's limp neo-classicism is, in contrast, a thing of chocolate box prettiness, lacking gods, dread and sex appeal.

But why bring sex into the equation? Well, the Greeks did. Where the Doric order (as in the Parthenon) was considered masculine, the Ionic was feminine, and the Corinthian evocative of young women.

By tradition, the Corinthian column was invented by the architect Callimachus, who saw the prickly leaves of an acanthus plant (found in the Peloponnese) sprouting from the tomb of a young virgin. Perhaps. What we know for certain is that the ravishing young women of Corinth were considered to be of decidedly easy virtue: the Greek verb which translates roughly as "I Corinthian" meant to have sex with a prostitute.

Just think what the Roman inventions of domes and arches might have signified. Their bravura civic and military architecture was "rediscovered" by Italian architects from the late 14th century. Leon Battista Alberti (1404-72) identified the Tuscan and Composite orders, adding them to the original three, and began a discourse on the principles and theory of classical architecture that continues. Many of the theories,

including those of Sebastiano Serlio (1475-1554), Giacomo Barozzi da Vignola (1507-73) and the great Andrea Palladio (1508-80), were works of the creative imagination rather than pure scholarship. Renaissance architects did not slavishly copy Roman prototypes but used the orders to shape a new classicism that evolved through what we like to call the High Renaissance. Mannerism and Baroque.

It was only in the 18th century that architects became obsessed with archaeological correctness as they rediscovered ancient Greece. In his treatise *Essai sur l'Architecture* (1753), the Jesuit Abbe Laugier argued that to be true to the spirit of the temples of the grove from which architecture sprang, buildings should be composed of nothing but columns. Even walls were suspect.

Such thinking led to the purism of the Greek Revival, and ultimately to the work of Albert Speer, if not to today's classical revival, which is only dreadful in the modern sense of the word. For better or worse, the classical language of architecture was re-interpreted this century by Modernists, who understood Nietzschean dread, even if they refused to obey the orders.

Tomorrow: Modern Architecture

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## obituaries/gazette

## Sir Nevill Mott

Nevill Mott was one of the great European scientists of this – or any – century. A theoretical physicist, in 1977 he was a joint winner of the Nobel Prize for his work on the electronic properties of disordered materials.

As Cavendish Professor of Physics at Cambridge from 1954 to 1971, he followed in the imperial line of Clark Maxwell, Lord Rayleigh, J.J. Thompson, Lord Rutherford and Sir Lawrence Bragg. His immediate successor, Sir Brian Pippard said yesterday:

In his younger days, Mott had an extraordinary range of interests and could keep many issues in his mind at the same time. As he aged, he tended to concentrate on single issues and to such effect that he was able to go on making important advances. By this economy, he continued right to the end to derive enormous enjoyment from his work, always tackling problems that he and others thought too hard and inspiring his younger colleagues to new efforts.

Nevill Mott's father, C.F. Mott, was a formidable director of education for the City of Liverpool, and his mother, Lilian Reynolds, was one of the earliest lady mathematicians. They sent him to Clifton College, where his interest in physics and mathematics was awakened. In his eighties he would reflect that individual teachers, like individual colleagues, could make all the difference to a scholar's progress and this was part of the reason he felt a driving compulsion to do something about science education.

Going up to St John's College, Cambridge, where he read Mathematics, he had the good fortune to come under the influence of Sir Lawrence Bragg, later Master of John's and a joint Nobel prize winner with his father. His first job was at Manchester University in 1929-30, which brought him into close contact with, and the lifelong friendship of, another formida-

ble Nobel prizewinner, Patrick Blackett, later to be Rector of Imperial College, London and President of the Royal Society.

On the instigation of Sir James Chadwick, Mott became a Fellow and Lecturer at Gonville and Caius College, Cambridge (where he worked under Rutherford) between 1930 and 1933, when he was plucked by Bristol, at the age of 28, to be the Melville Wills Professor of Theoretical Physics and to work with the controversial, Communist C.F. Powell.

At Bristol he continued work begun in Cambridge with H.S.W. Massey on the theory of atomic collisions and he then worked on the theory of the properties of metals and alloys. At the beginning of the Second World War, having published *Electronic Processes in Ionic Crystals* with R.W. Gurney in 1940, he was directed to the most sensitive war work including research on radar and wave mechanics.

His first post-war publication was *Wave Mechanics and Its Applications* with I.N. Snedden (1948). This was followed in 1952 by his important work on *Elements of Wave Mechanics*.

One of the remarkable aspects of Mott's life was the way he could run a department, take part in public life and still relentlessly pursue his own research. I asked him once how he managed to combine such a range of work. He said: "There is one factor above all others. I have a marvellous understanding wife who creates the conditions in which I can operate."

Ruth Horley, whom he married at the age of 25 in 1930, was a very remarkable partner.

At Cambridge, when he was given the Cavendish chair in 1954, Mott continued to work on the electronic processes in non-crystalline materials (publishing a book on them with E.A. Davis in 1971). In the last

two years of his tenure, when most professors would be "demohappy", at least as far as publications were concerned, Mott wrote his *Elementary Quantum Mechanics* (1972) as a help to students and, in the last year of his professorship, *Metal Insulator Transitions*, which his astonished contemporaries recognised as serious science by a man at pensionable age.

But Mott was much more than a famous scientist. In the spring of 1965, when still Cavendish Professor, he invited a group of new Labour MPs, Dr Jeremy Bray, Edmund Dell, Shirley Williams, and myself to a weekend at the Master's lodge at Caius, to discuss the science and education policy of the incoming Labour government. Mott outlined his views on the mechanism of shrinkage by which university departments which had been important in previous decades were less so than the emerging multidisciplinary sciences and new topics such as molecular biology. Recognising the pain this would inflict on blameless researchers, he had proposals as to what could be done. He was a man with solutions.

What was clear to us was that he had insatiable curiosity about public policy and domestic energy to improve education in the country. Not only was he President of the Physical Society (1956-58) and a member of the governing board of the National Institute for Research in Nuclear Science (1957-60), but also President of the Modern Languages Association (1955), because he believed in the European dimension of education and he had found the time to be an active chairman of the Ministry of Education's Standing Committee on the supply of schoolteachers (1959-62).

Until his ninth decade Mott gave the impression to his friends that while he always had



Mott: applied the newly developed quantum theory to solids

time for them he never wasted a minute in the pursuit of anything that was less than worthwhile and serious. The last time I saw him he was still exuding energy and discussing the reaction to his latest interest, a synthesis of the philosophy of science and religion, explained in his book *Can Scientists Believe?* (published in 1991).

Autobiographies by scientists are rare and even rarer is an autobiography which can be read by lay people with great interest. Mott's *A Life in Science*, published in 1986 when he was 81 years of age, is remarkably interesting. It should be read by anyone who is interested in British physics and European science in this century.

Tam Dalyell

Almost as remarkable as the range of Nevill Mott's researches was his style of working, writes Volker Heine. Right until the end, one might find him in a laboratory, learning from a young experimentalist the latest data and developing a theoretical understanding of them. For this he was always loved and respected.

Solids, metals, alloys, insulators, semi-conductors, are very complex in the phenomena they show and the different processes going on simultaneously. There are electrons bonding the atoms together and carrying electrical current (or not, in insulators) and perhaps magnetism, atomic vibrations activated by the temperature, structural defects such as dislocations, and always im-

purities or additives which may be beneficial as in alloys or transistors but which more often confuse what one is studying. All these interact with one another in many ways, and Mott had an almost unique gift for going into such a complex situation, finding intuitively the dominant features and stitching them together into a coherent theory.

In this he really opened up the subject of solid state physics world-wide from about 1932, though in most countries and most universities, it remained deeply unfashionable until after the Second World War and the invention of the transistor, or much much later in some cases. He would approach a new puzzling phenomenon by holding up to it all the pieces of physics he had ever thought deeply about, noting similarities and differences, and finally concluding: well, the explanation must be such and such. Theoreticians with a more formal mathematical approach could find discussion with Mott very frustrating!

His style was already evident in his book with H. Jones in 1935, *The Theory of Properties of the Metals and Alloys*. More than any other work worldwide, it applied the newly developed quantum theory to the complex phenomena in solids. The crystal structures of the elements, soft X-ray emission, alloy phase diagrams, electrical and thermal conductivity, optical properties, thermoelectric power, molten metals and other topics were included. These were dealt with in a mixture of rigorous theory supplemented by intuitive leaps where there were still huge gaps in the infant theory of solids.

Traditionally theoretical physics in Britain had developed as an offshoot of mathematics, so that it was a most unusual appointment when in 1933 he went to a chair of Theoretical

Physics in Bristol in a department that was wholly or predominantly devoted to experimental research (which he headed after 1948). But he that sort of theoretician. He gathered round him in Bristol a galaxy of collaborators whom he inspired and with whom he interacted closely, including R.W. Gurney, C. Frank, J. Mitchell, J. Friedel, N. Cabrera, and F. Nabarro.

When in 1954 he moved to Cambridge as Cavendish Professor, the leading position in Physics in Britain, as well as building up the whole department he started a group on the theoretical physics of solids (or condensed matter as it is now called). This has poured forth a stream of distinguished scientists and continues his tradition of close involvement with experiment and interpretation of the observed phenomena.

Although he enjoyed talking with young physicists, he had very few graduate students of his own, preferring to work with experimentalists and more senior colleagues. Before the advent of computing allowed a much more detailed connection between theory and experiment, theoretical physics involved having the right ideas and there was not much for a graduate student to assist with. Thus when I arrived from New Zealand in 1954, it took some persuasion for him to take me on, and the research project he suggested to me was characteristic: "Why don't you go over to the Low Temperature group and see if you can make yourself useful."

Two pieces of work showing his most profound insights are the variable range hopping, and the metal/insulator transition now called the Mott transition. Neither is easy to explain, even to a graduate class. In semiconductors, impurities at a very low concentration bind

one electron (or hole) to themselves, all with slightly different energies in a partially compensated sample due to the randomness. Vibrations of the parent semiconductor are needed to help an electron hop from one site to another over a variable range of distances to conduct electricity. In spite of the two types of randomness, Mott was able to derive a most unusual law for the conductivity.

The Mott transition may be described as follows. When a series of centres such as donor or acceptor impurities in semiconductors are far apart and hold one electron or hole each, they form an insulator at zero Kelvin temperature because it requires a finite energy to loose one such centre and add the electron to another centre which is already occupied. But when the centres overlap with one by more than a critical amount, they become a metal as for example in sodium metal where each atom also has one electron. The reason lies in the mobility of the electrons, which enables them to screen one another's charges and thus reduce a finite energy jump into an infinitesimal one.

**Nevill Francis Mott, physicist:** born Liverpool 30 September 1905; Lecturer, Manchester University 1929-30; Fellow and Lecturer, Gonville and Caius College, Cambridge 1930-33; Melville Wills Professor Theoretical Physics, Bristol University 1933-48; Henry Overton Wills Professor and Director, Henry Herbert Wills Physical Laboratories 1948-54; FRS 1936; Cavendish Professor of Physics, Cambridge University 1954-71; Master, Gonville and Caius College 1959-66; K 1962; Nobel Prize for Physics 1977; CH 1995; married 1930 Ruth Horley (two daughters); died Milton Keynes 8 August 1996.

## Kenneth Fleetwood

Ken Fleetwood's career as one of Britain's leading but most modest and reticent of fashion designers culminated seven weeks ago in a fittingly intimate ceremony at the London fashion house of Hardy Amies. It took place on 18 June, in that elegant establishment in Savile Row where Fleetwood had played a key role for nearly 45 years.

At a small, informal presentation the Countess of Airlie, wife of the Lord Chamberlain and a Lady of the Bedchamber (herself an old friend and customer), handed over to Fleetwood, on behalf of the Queen, the insignia of the MVO. The award had been announced in the New Year's Honours List and was of particular significance to him, being an honour in the personal gift of the Queen herself.

Because Fleetwood was too ill to attend the investiture at Buckingham Palace, the presentation was made at the workplace where for four decades he had exerted an influence not only on the Royal Wardrobe but on two generations of faithful Amies customers. Within this setting, surrounded by his fellow workers, many of long standing, it was touchingly appropriate that Sir Hardy Amies, doyen of British fashion designers and Fleetwood's employer, friend and mentor of a lifetime, should have been able, at 87, to look upon his long-time protégé with justifiable pride.

Fleetwood, who had led the studio design team which created the Queen's wardrobe for her hugely successful tour of South Africa in 1995, had been attending fittings and consultations with the Queen since

Amies relinquished the role seven years ago on reaching the age of 80. But Fleetwood's first opportunity of attending the Queen as the salon's chief representative occurred in 1986 when Amies had suddenly to go abroad on business. The occasion was recalled by Amies in his autobiography, *Still Here* (1984), where he noted that his emissary had been greatly beguiled by the Queen's personality and her ready shafts of humour. Amies also noted that the Queen had sent back a message saying that she had spent a happy afternoon. Although Fleetwood was the soul of discretion regarding his visits to the palace it is not too difficult to speculate that his royal patron would have appreciated, as did his friends, his characteristically unaffected, no-nonsense, northern approach.

Born and brought up in Wigan, Fleetwood attended Wigan Grammar School where he became highly proficient in art. In 1948, at the age of 18, having obtained a grant to study fashion design, he struck out from his Lancastrian roots and came to London to take the three-year Fashion course at St Martin's School of Art. Then, as now, the school had a flourishing design department and Fleetwood's talents quickly developed in these stimulating surroundings, particularly his skill at costume drawing. His sketches always conveyed with their lithe and tensile line a fluid sense of how clothes fitted and moved with the body, their detail summarised in bursts of dashing calligraphy.

Over the years he repaid his debt to St Martin's by return-



Fleetwood with the grand, romantic ballgowns that were his speciality, 1989; these were for the Duchess of York Photograph: Camera Press

ing as a part-time lecturer to many courses of graduate students who were quick to appreciate his candour and his deflationary humour about the fashion business.

On leaving St Martin's in 1951 he worked for some months as assistant to the theatre designer London Sainthill on ballet and stage designs. The following year he was invited by Hardy Amies to join his design studio and to work as an illustrator and

sketch-maker, presenting initial ideas of how outfits would look when worn by models.

Amies had shrewdly spotted that Fleetwood's well-mannered taste and innate practicality would make him an ideal addition to the firm. Apart from his term of National Service, when he served for 18 months in the Royal Corps of Signals, he was to spend his entire working life in Savile Row as a sturdy pillar of Amies's couture.

Having been initiated by

Amies into the art and technique of clothes design he quickly advanced from the role of sketcher to become a member of the studio design team. Here he was able to cultivate the virtues of an established, traditional fashion house whose clientele preferred to wear well-made, flattering and stylish clothes firmly within the bounds of decorum.

The well-cut suit, the finely detailed day dress were the staples of the Amies studio to-

gether with grand and romantic ballgowns (a particular Fleetwood speciality) of strong, classic line and often glowing, jewel-like colour. Fleetwood, with his flair for elegant draughtsmanship, his sense of line and discerning eye had the wit and skill to add a sufficient spicing of verve and colour to these designs to give his well-trodden customers the kind of enjoyment that would make them come back, asking for more.

As the international mens-

wear side of Hardy Amies Ltd began to expand, often taking Amies himself on long merchandising trips across the world, Amies realised that he could safely leave the women's side of the business to Fleetwood. He had proved that he had a natural empathy with the couture clientele, could be relied upon to see that the customers were properly cosseted, had a keen understanding of the traditions of the house. His northern good sense made him a shrewd and canny shopkeeper.

Since 1974, when he was appointed Design Director, Fleetwood was responsible for all the women's wear of the Amies Mayfair salon and over the years he had played a large part in the creation of the Queen's wardrobe for numerous royal tours, state occasions and ceremonial visits. This exacting task requires a variety of skills not the least of which are the need to allow for a high degree of royal visibility, an understanding of the practical aspects of easy wearing in operational conditions and the ability to cater for varying extremes of climate. All these considerations Fleetwood could balance with tact, experience and flair.

With his sometimes amusingly lugubrious cast of feature, Fleetwood was a witty, civilised man with a love of music (for which he had the keenest ear) and a deep knowledge of art on which he expressed strongly personal and pertinent views. To his friends it sometimes seemed surprising that one so quiet and taciturn and with such a coolly appraising nature should have flourished in the heady, hot-house world of fashion. But

Fleetwood never lost the sense of his roots and his dry, sharp, down-to-earth manner remained always that of a knowing and unimpressible northerner who accepted the feverish, inbred milieu of the fashion world only on his own level-headed terms. Within this brittle profession he worked with assiduous professionalism and application, and although it led him to mix with the fashionably rich and grand he always maintained his own centre of integrity.

With his essentially thoughtful and self-contained personality Fleetwood could never have been described as gregarious, but beneath the layers of introspection and dreaminess he was a witty and rewarding friend, often wickedly deflating, capable of well-timed asperities and, when the mood took him, one who could be a comic fantasist of a high order. At such times, and at his most relaxed, he was hilarious company, particularly in Oxfordshire in the charmingly converted mid-Victorian schoolhouse which Amies had bought in 1980 and filled with warm-hued oak furniture and 17th-century tapestries, and which he shared with Fleetwood at weekends.

It was appropriate that Fleetwood, who had made such a distinctive contribution to British fashion and to so many royal occasions, should have been able, at the very end of his life, to see his work so signally recognised.

Derek Granger

**Kenneth Walter Fleetwood, fashion designer:** born Wigan 11 November 1930; MVO 1996; died London 9 August 1996.

## Frida Boccaro

The old Bobino music hall in the Rue de la Gâité, Montparnasse, was one of my favourite rendezvous in the Sixties and Seventies. Georges Brassens was one of its most regular and popular stars of the chanson: in 1964 he had a three-month season there which attracted over 120,000 fans. It was also a platform for many young and promising unknowns, who were always encouraged by Brassens. One night I found he had invited to occupy the first part of his programme a beautiful Moroccan girl, Frida Boccaro, who had already begun to make a

name for herself through an impressive repertoire of the improbable name of Buck Ram.

Her charismatic presence on the stage reminded me of another of my idols, the Egyptian enchantress Dalida, a few years older. Both had beautiful voices, of wide range, deep and thrilling, high and surprisingly sweet, and both seemed to sing as if every song was sheer poetry. Indeed, they made even the most trivial and sentimental ditties sound like true poems, and those often banal words and emotions used to move me to tears in a way that few real po-

ets in English ever do. Dalida had been born in Egypt of Italian parents who loved opera. Frida Boccaro began studying classical music and taking lessons in operatic singing as soon as she left secondary school.

She started a vocal and instrumental trio with her brother and sister in Casablanca, with some success. But she knew she would have to try her chance in Paris, where she was taken on by the celebrated teacher of chanson singing and composition, Mireille, who in 1954 had founded her Petit Conservatoire de la Chanson in

the rue de l'Université, where she used her unique training methods to help talented youngsters discover their true musical abilities and personalities.

Through Mireille, Frida soon began making music-hall appearances and recordings, and was launched on an international career, for at first she appeared mainly outside France, in tours of Eastern Europe, and performed in jazz festivals like the one in Sofia in 1967. She also travelled to Australia, Canada and Central and South America, where several of her

hit numbers became successful: "Cent mille chansons" ("One Hundred Thousand Songs"), and "Les Moulins de mon cœur" ("The Windmills of my Heart"), written and composed especially for her warm, intimate, caressing voice by Eddy Markey and Emile Stern, her permanent parolier and composer.

One of the very few really memorable songs of the deplorable Eurovision Song Contest (Grand Prix, 1969) was "Un Jour un enfant", and in those days, when a triumph on television truly mattered, it shot Boccaro to even greater fame.

She won the prestigious Prix de l'Académie Charles Cros, and was also honoured with a number of golden discs.

She never forgot her classical roots, and some of her later songs were set to music by Telemann and other great classics, always by her parolier Eddy Markey.

Today, despite the continued popularity of stars like Charles Trenet, Aznavour, Enrico Macias, Jean Ferrat, Sacha Distel and the unsinkable Georges Guétary, and the daily afternoon programmes on France Télévision conducted by the

inimitable Pascal Sevran with his admirably eclectic tastes, true chanson singing is in sad decline in Europe, and even in France. Frida Boccaro took up the art just a little too late, and then rock-and-roll swept it away almost for good and all.

She retired from performing in the cruel Seventies, but left behind her a collection of superb recordings and the memory of one of my most enchanted evenings at the old Bohème, where Georges Brassens invited her to sing with him "Au Bois de mon cœur". James Kirkup



Boccaro: sheer poetry Photograph: Hulton Getty

**Frida Boccaro, singer and music-hall artist:** born Casablanca 1940; died Paris 1 August 1996.

## BIRTHS

SANDS: On 1 August 1996, to Carol (née Boddie) and Martin, a daughter, Emma Charlotte.

## MARRIAGES

JUKES / CORBETT: At Elvet Methodist Church, Durham City, on 10 August 1996, Christopher John to Anne Lesley. Congratulations from both families.

## DEATHS

MEVLER: Stephen, on 6 August 1996, after a short illness. Beloved husband

## Births, Marriages &amp; Deaths

of Bride, father of Andrew and Catherine, and much loved grandfather. Family flowers only. Donations if desired to Pilgrims Hospice, Canterbury c/o Brits Funeral Service, 20 High Street, Sandwich, Kent CT13 9EB.

## Birthdays

Miss Elizabeth Appleby QC, 54; Mr Michael Brunson, newscaster, 56; Mr Kenneth Collins, MEP, 57; Lord Colbrook, former government minister, 74; Mr Gordon Duggan, High Commissioner to Singapore, 59; Admiral Sir Kenneth Eaton, former Controller of the Navy, 62; Mr George Hamilton, actor, 57; Air Marshal Sir Maurice Heath, 87; General Sir Patrick Howard-Dobson, former president, Royal British Legion, 75; Sir Anthony Joffile, former Lord Mayor of London, 58;

Mr Mark Knopfler, singer and rock guitarist, 47; Mr Norris McWhirter, a founder of the Guinness Book of Records, 71; Sir Robin Nicholson, metallurgist, 63; Lord Renton QC, former government minister, 88; Mr Peter West, sports commentator, 76; Professor Graham Zelik, Principal, Queen Mary and Westfield College, London, 43.

## Anniversaries

Births: Rowland Hill, preacher, 1744; Thomas Bewick, wood en-

graver, artist and naturalist, 1753; George IV, King, 1762; Robert Southey, poet, 1774; Sir Joseph Barnby, conductor and academic principal, 1838; Sir Alfred Gilbert, sculptor and goldsmith, 1834; Mary Roberts Rinehart, novelist and playwright, 1876; Marguerite "John" Radcliffe-Hall, author, 1880; Cecil Blount De Mille, film producer and director, 1881; Frank Arthur Searns, novelist, 1884; Erwin Schrödinger, physicist, 1887; Deaths: Philip VI, King of France, 1350; Philippe de Champaigne, painter, 1674; Robert Stewart, second Marquess of Lond-

donderry and Viscount Castlereagh, statesman, committed suicide 1822; William Blake, poet and painter, 1827; George Stephenson, locomotive engineer, 1848; William Daniel Conybeare, geologist, 1857; Sir William Jackson Hooker, botanist, 1865; John Philip Holland, designer of the submarine, 1914; Arthur Griffith, Irish nationalist and president of Sinn Féin, 1922; Lord Janasack, composer, 1928; Thomas Fleming, novelist, creator of "James Bond", 1964; Thomas Edward Driberg, first Baron Driberg, jour-

nalist, 1976; Henry Fonda, actor, 1982. On this day: the Crusaders were victorious at the Battle of Ascalon, 1099; the Duke of Wellington's troops entered Madrid, 1812; in a contest, the schooner *America* beat the British yacht *Aurora*, giving rise later to the "America's Cup", 1851; the United States and Spain concluded an armistice over Cuba and other possessions, 1898; Britain declared war on Austria-Hungary, 1914; during the Second World War, the "prize line under the ocean" (PLUTO) began operating beneath the English Channel, 1944; *Echo*, the

first communications satellite, 100 feet in diameter, was launched, 1965. Today is the Feast Day of St Euplus, St Lambert, archbishop of Canterbury, St Murtagh or Muredach, St Porcarius and his Companions.

## Changing of the Guard

The Household Cavalry Mounted Regiment, the Queen's Life Guard at Horse Guards, 11am; 3rd Battalion Royal Gurkha Rifles, 11.30am; the Queen's Guard at Buckingham Palace, 11.30am, band provided by the Coldstream Guards.

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150

# Failure of the predicted takeover stampede mystifies experts

The failure of the widely predicted takeover stampede to materialise continues to mystify many stock market observers. At the start of the year the world and its dog expected 1995's record-breaking, rip-roaring run to continue and even gather pace.

In the event an unexciting £16bn of bids were completed in the first six months. Granada's £3.9bn strike at the Forte catering and hotel empire was the biggest, otherwise it was left to utilities to keep the big money action flowing. As NatWest Securities say: "Given companies are cash-rich and bids will be harder to push through under Labour, we would have expected more."

It is easy to blame the market's limp performance on the muted bid activity. After hitting peaks early this year shares have tended to drift although interest rates have fallen. Company results have been reasonably good and dividend

growth robust. Cash calls have not been much of a threat, some £2bn in the first half, and the flow of new issues has not been the drain many feared.

Naturally, there is a feeling a sudden outbreak of corporate hostility would restore the market's confidence, guaranteeing fulfilment of those forecasts that Footsie would end this month at 4,000.

In the unlikely event of a blaze of bids in the lazy, hazy days of summer there is not much to excite shares, despite last week's advance which took Footsie back above 3,800.

Blue chips progressed for seven trading sessions on the trot, a remarkable sequence. There was much talk that 3,900 would be reached but interest petered out as the week drew to a close.

A further interest rate cut could help, depending on the market's mood. New York influences remain important although London underlined

## STOCK MARKET WEEK

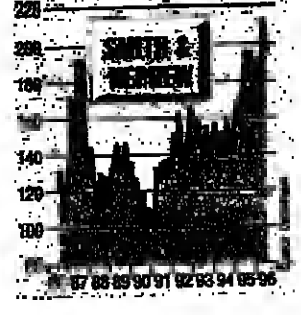
### DEREK PAIN

Stock market reporter of the year



fastest than envisaged but corporate earnings should be buoyant without an associated deterioration in the inflationary outlook.

## SHARE SPOTLIGHT



football club reporting this week and restaurant group Ask Central are among them.

And the junior market continues to attract recruits.

This week London & Edinburgh Publishing should finally arrive although it has been forced to trim back its expectations.

Against earlier hopes of a £4m capitalisation it has had to settle for just over £3m. The company publishes brochures, programmes and commemorative books. It comes to market via John East & Partners and Fiske & Co.

Demotest is also scheduled to arrive this week. It is a rather bizarre new issue. The company's claim to fame is a cheap method of ironing out creases in cars. It is another new issue from AIM specialists Neill Clerk and stockbroker Ellis and Partners.

week's unseasonable rush of activity.

It is, in effect, the calm before the storm of the September profits season.

Even so, four Footsie constituents parade their wares. Smith & Nephew, the healthcare group, is one of them with interim figures today.

Profits are expected to emerge at around £91m against £85.3m. Slow growth in the US has prompted a number of downgrades. There will not be a contribution from the group's skin tissue replacement involvement which is regarded by many as the outstanding development in its growing but still largely mundane portfolio.

It was only in April that S&N linked with a US group Advanced Tissue Sciences. Its relationship sent its shares sharply higher although much of the enthusiasm has subsequently abated.

weather are expected to take their toll at the General Accident insurance giant and interim profits will be down, probably by the third to £170m.

BOC, a chemical group, offers third-quarter figures with the market looking for up to £115m against £99.8m, and Hanson, also with quarterly figures, should produce around £280m, down from £321m.

The Hanson statement will be eagerly scanned for further details of the controversial four-way demerger.

There are hopes that it will soothe some of the fears which have swept through the market about the nitty-gritty of the break-up.

Others reporting include Sedgwick, the insurance broker with £65m against £63.1m on the cards, and WPP, the advertising group which should manage more than £20m compared with £48m. MAID, the on-line information group, is also listed to appear.

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Alcoholic Beverages				
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BUSINESS NEWS DESK: Tel 0171 293 2636 Fax 0171 293 2098

Stock market week/share prices  
Interview: Newsquest's Jim Brown  
David Miles: Reason to bless risk-takers

CITY & BUSINESS EDITOR: JEREMY WARNER

# Internet home shopping 'over-hyped and floundering'

NIGEL COPE

Electronic home shopping via the Internet and other new media is over-hyped and floundering, according to a report published today.

It suggests that without a quantum leap in technology and a big shift in consumer attitudes, electronic home shopping will remain only a tiny fraction of retail sales.

The study, by retail consultants Verdict Research, is among the most critical yet on the potential of electronic shop-

ping which some technology gurus have portrayed as a "high street killer". It concludes that new media such as the Internet and interactive television will still account for less than 8 per cent of all retail sales by 2010.

It criticises the Internet for being slow and cumbersome with poor graphics quality. It is also expensive to use, the report says. It concludes: "The fundamental problem is that the majority of people like shopping. They prefer to see, touch, try out or try on goods they are thinking of buying. There is nothing

about the Internet that will change this."

The new study contradicts many other reports which suggest that new technology will have a fundamental impact on the way people shop. These surveys say that though Internet retail sales amounted to only \$500m last year, the figure will grow to \$6bn by the end of the decade.

Consultants like Hoskyns, the computer services group, predict that a combination of technological improvements and demographic changes such

as the growing up of the Nintendo generation, which is more comfortable with computers, will cause a sudden explosion in the market.

"We think these factors will be the trigger that causes the whole sector to take off rapidly," says Hoskyns director Lee Eschholme.

Hoskyns says that the biggest impact will not be on the high street but the out-of-town supermarkets and shopping centres which will no longer have the monopoly on convenience shopping. It also predicts the high street could make a

comeback as the centre of the community with smaller shops like delicatessens and bakeries.

The last 12 months has seen a wave of UK retailers rushing to offer on-line services. In the last month Boots and Marks & Spencer have launched "Web-sites" on the Internet though they are not selling goods on the system yet.

However Sainsbury and Tesco have both been selling wine on the Internet for over a year. Dixons is selling electronic goods, WH Smith is offering books and Virgin is

selling records and videos. Great Universal Stores, the mail order giant that owns the Kays and Marshall Ward catalogues, has set up 17 "virtual shops" on the Internet selling everything from sports goods to DIY equipment.

"We are serious about it and we think it is going to be an important new area of business for us," says Lesley Mingay, the company's head of electronic retailing. GUS is working on a "virtual mannequin" that will enable shoppers to choose a garment, key in their vital statistics

and see it displayed on a graphic image on the screen.

Many retailers are nervous about the impact of electronic shopping, which they fear will take consumers out of their stores and leave them with a redundant portfolio.

Already a large numbers of "virtual retailers" are springing up in the US. They have no shops and sell direct to customers at lower prices. Amazon Books claims to be the world's largest bookshop with more than a million titles on offer. But it has no shops, only a huge

warehouse outside Seattle. The Internet is also seeing a host of new services springing up catering for specific groups. One is Shop UK, which offers a service aimed at homesick expatriates and Anglophiles.

Run by a family in Buckinghamshire, it offers to buy anything readily available in UK shops and deliver it anywhere in the world. Though quintessentially English favourites such as marmalade and Branston Pickle are offered, the most popular requests are for Marks & Spencer clothing and tea.

## Hamanaka is alive and well and in Tokyo

JOHN WILLCOCK

Yasuo Hamanaka, the man at the heart of the Sumitomo Corporation copper trading scandal, broke eight weeks of silence yesterday to say that he was doing well and had been living quietly in Tokyo since being fired in June.

In a brief interview with Reuters at an undisclosed location in Tokyo, Hamanaka also said that he would comment on the scandal "some time in the future".

He said he had no contact with his former employer since he was fired on 14 June, a day after the company announced that it had lost \$1.8bn due to what it said were unauthorised copper trades, mainly by Mr Hamanaka. The interview was his first since the affair broke. His location since then has been a mystery.

He appeared relaxed despite the swirl of publicity around him

after his company alleged that he was the main cause of the biggest financial scandal in history. But he refused to discuss the case.

"I don't want to make any comment on that issue. I will talk to you in detail at the right time in the future," he said.

A spokeswoman for the Serious Fraud Office yesterday refused to comment on Mr Hamanaka's emergence, as the SFO has a policy of not talking about operational details of its investigations.

She did, however, say that three members of the SFO visited Japan at the end of June over the Sumitomo scandal. "We did this to set up lines of communication with the Special Procurator's Office (the Japanese equivalent of the SFO). Our working relationship with them so far has been very productive and cordial."

Mr Hamanaka has broken his silence days after the SFO raid-

ed the English country homes of the two heads of Winchester Commodities Group, as part of its probe into the Sumitomo scandal.

Winchester, which was the primary UK metals broker for Hamanaka in the early 1990s, was investigated last year for its business with the Japanese trader. The investigation was dropped earlier this year but was restarted after the Sumitomo scandal broke in June.

The homes of Charles "Copperfingers" Vincent and Ashley Levett in the southern county of Hampshire were searched on Wednesday and documents were taken by Fraud Office investigators.

Both Mr Vincent and Mr Levett, who spend most of their time at their homes in Monaco since retiring last year, were away from England at the time of the searches.

The SFO would not comment on what it was looking for or



Sudden re-appearance: Yasuo Hamanaka, the former Sumitomo copper trader, says he will comment later

even on the names of the owners of the homes.

"Officers from the Serious Fraud Office and the City of London police executed search warrants on two residential premises in Hampshire yesterday as part of an ongoing investigation into the copper

trading market," a spokeswoman said in a statement.

Winchester spokesman John Kiely also would not comment on the searches, except to say that "we've said all along we would fully co-operate with any investigations and that continues to be the case".

The searches represent an increase in activity by investigators in the two-month-old Sumitomo copper scandal.

The SFO is conducting its investigation in tandem with the UK's Securities and Investments Board and the Commodity Futures Trading

Commission in the US. Sumitomo is conducting its own investigation and has said that it will complete it within six months.

Separately, the Securities and Investments Board said it would release a consultative paper in the next few days.

## Thyssen chief stays on despite £30m scandal

PATRICK TOOHER

The chairman of Thyssen, the German steel giant, has vowed to stay on in his job despite being arrested last week in connection with a £30m fraud probe.

In an interview published today in *Der Spiegel*, the respected weekly news magazine, Dieter Vogel says: "I plan to perform the duties of my office for quite some time."

He went on to call the Berlin prosecutor's actions "outrageous". Mr Vogel and nine other managers at Thyssen and the east German metals company Metallurgiehafel were arrested as part of an investigation into allegations they had defrauded the Treuhand privatisation agency.

Detectives searched the homes of several of the arrested men, including Mr Vogel, together with Thyssen's head office in Düsseldorf, for evidence linked to the alleged fraud. All but one of the managers were later released on bail of up to DM2.5m (£1.69m).

The arrests followed an investigation into Metallurgiehafel, which was bought by Thyssen after German re-unification in 1990.

Noting that he and his colleagues had offered to co-operate with authorities in the investigation, Mr Vogel says: "I

cannot comprehend the accusations and the actions."

The arrest warrants had been based on suspicions that the executives would flee Germany, but Mr Vogel said several of them actually interrupted vacations abroad to respond to authorities.

Among the other arrests were former Thyssen chairman Heinrich Kersten, and directors Josef von Riedere and Hans Ulrich Gruber.

Prosecutors allege that Thyssen managers took DM37.8m from Metallurgiehafel when it was sold and say that a further DM32.2m of damages was caused by manipulating accounts.

Thyssen reportedly charged the Treuhand questionable high rates for retraining eastern workers. In some cases the training might not have taken place.

Mr Vogel told *Der Spiegel* that no new facts or evidence had surfaced since the case was suspended on 22 October 1993. Thyssen and BvS, the Treuhand's successor agency, reached a settlement in 1995 under which Thyssen paid DM86.6m. The investigation was re-opened in May.

Thyssen called the arrest warrants illegal and said it would fight the accusations with all legal means at its disposal.

## Ruling set to batter BAT shares

PATRICK TOOHER

Shares in BAT Industries are expected to open sharply lower this morning after a Florida jury awarded \$500,000 to a man who developed lung cancer from smoking cigarettes for 44 years.

Tobacco shares plunged by up to 13 per cent on Wall Street after the verdict was returned on Friday against Brown and Williamson, the manufacturer of Lucky Strikes whose parent company is BAT.

Although BAT did not fall by as much as rival cigarette

groups Philip Morris or RJR, analysts fear that as much as £1.5bn could be wiped off its value when trading begins in London today.

At Friday's close BAT was capitalised at £15.8bn but a fall of anything like that seen in New York would remove it from the top 10 of Britain's biggest quoted companies.

In a legal judgment with potentially disastrous consequences for the tobacco industry, a Florida jury found after two days of deliberations that the cigarettes Grady Carter, 66, smoked were a "defective"

product and that the makers had shown negligence in not alerting smokers to how dangerous they were.

A lawyer for the plaintiff said her firm alone had "hundreds" of similar cases pending, most of them based on the argument that tobacco companies had failed adequately to warn smokers of the addictive nature of cigarettes.

Cigarette makers, who proudly boast of never having had to pay a penny in damages in similar cases going back 40 years, insist the latest ruling is flawed and will be overturned

in an appeal court. The closest the tobacco industry came to paying out was in 1988 when a New Jersey court awarded damages of \$400,000 to a long-time smoker.

But an appeal court later overturned the decision.

In May, a landmark ruling sent shares in BAT soaring after a US federal appeals court dismissed a class action lawsuit which could have resulted in millions of smokers suing cigarette companies.

The court ruled that smokers could only sue cigarette companies on an individual basis.



Last gasp: £500,000 suit

## Fund managers back Europe

PATRICK TOOHER

Shrugging off apocalyptic talk of an imminent crash in global stock markets, fund managers are becoming more optimistic about the prospect for equities on both sides of the Atlantic, according to survey of their investment plans published today.

This summer has seen a procession of doom-and-gloom merchants lining up to warn of an imminent collapse of stock markets world-wide. They were led by Elaine Garzarelli, credited with calling the 1987 crash, who said US shares might fall by 20 per cent from their recent peaks.

Her prognosis, and fears of an imminent rise in US interest rates, led to volatile trading on Wall Street and in London. But fund managers are clearly

taking their cue from a recent clutch of benign US economic data that has taken the selling pressure off stock markets.

In its August poll of 74 financial institutions, handling funds worth £931bn, US investment bank Merrill Lynch finds that the balance of UK-based fund managers planning to reduce exposure to UK

shares has fallen to just 3 per cent from 21 per cent last month and a low of 39 per cent in June.

On a 12-month view of the UK stock market, the balance of bulls to bears is 32 per cent compared with 20 per cent in July.

Institutional investors are also adopting a more upbeat attitude

towards Wall Street. A balance of 14 per cent of respondents are looking to cut their weightings in US shares compared with 20 per cent last month.

And fund managers are continuing to back the recent recovery in the UK property market, with a balance of 8 per cent planning to raise exposure, up from 5 per cent a month ago.

## Tax cuts to enhance feel-good factor

The feel-good factor has returned to the UK economy and will be further boosted by tax cuts in the Budget, according to a report published today.

It points to growth in the purchase of expensive items such as homes and cars as a clear sign that consumer confidence is returning.

The quarterly state of the market report by the Chartered Institute of Marketing says the property sector - more important in the UK than any other country - is becoming more buoyant as rising prices and continuing mortgage repayments eliminate negative equity.

Wage rises are expected to outpace price rises, increasing the amount of disposable income available to consumers, the institute says.

Although the Chancellor, Kenneth Clarke, has played down the chances of tax cuts, the institute forecasts reductions worth 2p off the basic rate of income tax.

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STOCK MARKETS									
FT-SE 100									
Index	Close	Week's chg	Change (%)	1996 High	1996 Low	YTD High	YTD Low	YTD High	YTD Low
FTSE 100	3810.70	+40.1	+1.1	3857.10	3632.30	4.10			
FTSE 250	4324.50	+58.8	+1.4	4568.80	4015.30	3.49			
FTSE 350	1907.30	+21.3	+1.1	1945.40	1816.60	3.97			
FT Small Cap	2121.04	+28.9	+1.3	2244.36	1954.06	3.12			
FT All Share	1884.86	+21.3	+1.1	1924.17	1791.95	3.91			
New York	5981.31	+1.5	+0.0	5778.00	5032.94	2.20			
Tokyo	20561.05	-389.4	-1.8	22666.80	19734.70	0.761			
Hong Kong	11104.03	+142.1	+1.3	11594.99	10204.87	3.441			
Frankfurt	2525.64	+17.0	+0.7	2583.49	2253.36	1.801			

Source: FT Information

INTEREST RATES									
UK interest rates									
Index	1 Month	1 Year	3 Month	6 Month	9 Month	12 Month	15 Month	18 Month	21 Month
UK	5.75	6.00	7.75	8.08	7.90	8.16			
US	5.34	5.81	6.45	6.61	6.72	6.99			
Japan	0.36	0.84	3.20	3.02					
Germany	3.29	3.44	6.27	6.73	6.99				

Bond Yields %									
Index	1 Month	1 Year	3 Month	6 Month	9 Month	12 Month	15 Month	18 Month	21 Month
UK	5.75	6.00	7.75	8.08	7.90	8.16			
US	5.34	5.81	6.45	6.61	6.72	6.99			
Japan	0.36	0.84	3.20	3.02					
Germany	3.29	3.44	6.27	6.73	6.99				

Money Market Rates									
Index	1 Month	1 Year	3 Month	6 Month	9 Month	12 Month	15 Month	18 Month	21 Month
UK	5.75	6.00	7.75	8.08	7.90	8.16			
US	5.34	5.81	6.45	6.61	6.72	6.99			
Japan	0.36	0.84	3.20	3.02					
Germany	3.29	3.44	6.27	6.73	6.99				

MAIN PRICE CHANGES									
Index	1 Month	1 Year	3 Month	6 Month	9 Month	12 Month	15 Month	18 Month	21 Month
UK	5.75	6.00	7.75	8.08	7.90	8.16			
US	5.34	5.81	6.45	6.61	6.72	6.99			
Japan	0.36	0.84	3.20	3.02					
Germany	3.29	3.44	6.27	6.73	6.99				

CURRENCIES									
\$/£									
Index	Close	Week's chg	Tr. High	Tr. Low	1996 High	1996 Low	YTD High	YTD Low	YTD High
\$ (London)	1.5498	+0.022	1.5773	1.5270	1.5773	1.5270	1.5773	1.5270	1.5773
\$ (New York)	1.5500	+0.022	1.5773	1.5270	1.5773	1.5270	1.5773	1.5270	1.5773
DM (London)	2.2807	+1.104	2.2908	2.2608	2.2908	2.2608	2.2908	2.2608	2.2908
¥ (London)	187.524	+2.583	187.872	187.176	187.872	187.176	187.872	187.176	187.872
₹ (London)	84.5	+0.5	84.4	84.4	84.4	84.4	84.4	84.4	84.4

Other Indicators									
Index	Close	Week's chg	Tr. High	Tr. Low	1996 High	1996 Low	YTD High	YTD Low	YTD High
Oil Brent \$	19.90	+0.56	16.25	15.0	16.25	15.0	16.25	15.0	16.25
Gold \$	387.70	+1.25	384.00	384.00	384.00	384.00	384.00	384.00	384.00
Gold £	250.21	-0.25	243.42	243.42	243.42	243.42	243.42	243.42	243.42
Base Rates									
UK	5.75								
US	5.34								
Japan	0.36								
Germany	3.29								

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DAVID MILES

The sooner we realise that there are strong grounds for supporting welfare spending and redistributive taxation purely on efficiency grounds the better

# Why society has reason to bless the risk-takers

The United States is often thought of as a country where people are prepared to take economic risks, without risk-takers capitalism is unlikely to work very well and so – the story goes – it is no accident that the most successful large economy in the world is one where the entrepreneurial spirit burns especially bright.

But just how bright is that? Recent research provides some fascinating answers to the question of just how much economic risk people in the US find acceptable. And these answers shed important light on the value of forms of social insurance and fiscal redistribution that cushion individuals against such risks.

First to the results. Four US economists recently conducted a survey of the attitudes to risk of over 11,000 adults\*. The key question in their survey went like this: "Suppose that you are the only income-earner in the family, and you have a good job guaranteed to give you your current income every year for life. You are given the opportunity to take a new and equally good job, with a 50-50 chance that it will double your income and a 50-50 chance that it will cut your income by a third. Would you take the new job?"

Note one thing about this offer: on average, a move to this new job increases your income for the rest of your working life by 33 per cent. You might think this looks a pretty good gamble. If you did you would be in the minority in the US. Over 75 per cent of the sample surveyed would reject this opportunity. Even when the downside risk was reduced substantially, so that the worst outcome was a 20 per cent fall in income but the chance to double income remained the same, about two-thirds of the sample rejected

the offer. Interestingly, there is not a big overall difference between the sexes in answers. But there are differences by religion; Jewish people were significantly more inclined to accept the risk than other groups.

Now if people are this risk-averse – and the survey is based on a very large sample – it suggests that the value of the social insurance created by welfare systems and by the redistribution in income caused by progressive taxation may be very large. This is a point often ignored by commentators on welfare and taxation.

The more common view is that the welfare system and redistributive taxation generate economic costs, in terms of diminished incentives, but that against this there is a strong moral case for helping the worst off. There is then a trade-off between economic efficiency and helping the disadvantaged.

Clearly there are lots of things right in this view – there are efficiency costs in very high taxation and in providing benefits at a level that makes the option of working unattractive to many, and there is also a strong moral case for helping the least well-off. So in certain cases the trade-off view is reasonable. But by implying that there is always and inevitably a trade-off between economic efficiency and helping the disadvantaged it ignores some powerful mechanisms working the other way; there are strong reasons to believe that many aspects of welfare and taxation encourage productivity and increase national output. And this has a lot to do with aversion to risk.

Consider again the results of the US research and think what those answers suggest about people's attitudes to further education

or to training for a specific job. Spending time and money on further education or specialised training probably generates a high average return for most people but it is risky; there may be no job at the end of the training or the exams may turn out to be too hard. Suppose you have to finance the training yourself and if you do not make the grade and find no job the level of unemployment benefit is very low. Given a high degree of risk-aversion the option of a low-paid, but currently available and fairly safe, job may seem preferable.

From a social point of view this could be highly undesirable; if the returns to further training are as high as in the survey question and if the risks for individuals even out in aggregate then the case for encouraging people to take the gamble of investing in themselves becomes very strong. Two obvious ways to encourage such risk-taking are to subsidise education and to reduce the downside risk of poor after-training job prospects through income support and unemployment benefits.

The free-market counter to all this is simple while risk-aversion means that forms of co-insurance are valuable it does not imply

that the state should provide that insurance. In principle, this is a good reply but, in practice, in those areas where the effects of risk are likely to be greatest the provision of insurance by companies may be lacking.

Private insurance markets cannot be expected to work well when the insurer finds it hard to know what individual risks are and how hard individuals are trying to avoid them. Think again of the training examples: would one expect insurance companies to offer cover against failing exams or against future unemployment? Probably not: the chances are that the people who might buy such insurance are not a random sample of students but predominantly those who either know they may have problems or are not prepared to work to avoid them. Government provision of insurance to all – financed through taxation – cuts through this problem.

It may appear paradoxical to see part of the value of social insurance (or the tax-welfare system) as being a spur to entrepreneurship, efficiency and higher incomes. This may be because many of the highest profile people who are successful are keen to explain how they achieved their aims through hard work and talent rather than from help from the state. This should not blind one from the

pretty obvious point that if there is insurance against some of the worst outcomes that could arise from taking a risk then more people will take risks. And it is the poor, or those from poor families, who are likely to be most put off risky investments in their own education or gambles in a risky enterprise which can have high pay-offs: the wealthy can afford to take more chances.

What we all lose from the reluctance of talented people to gamble is the greater wealth, on average, they would generate if they took risks; there are numerous ways in which that wealth accrues to society more widely and not just go to the risk-taker. This way of thinking about some of the benefits of social insurance is hard-headed and calculating; it does not focus on need or on the pain of poverty but looks at least opportunities for higher national output.

I make no excuses for this. The sooner we realise that there are strong grounds for supporting welfare spending and redistributive taxation purely on efficiency grounds the better. The proposition that efficiency losses generated by redistributive taxation and by welfare systems are inevitably a price to be paid for helping the disadvantaged is false.

David Miles is Professor of economics at Imperial College, University of London and an adviser to Merrill Lynch.

\* "Preference Parameters and Behavioural Heterogeneity: An Experimental Approach in the Health and Retirement Survey", by Robert Barsky, Miles Kimball, Thomas Juster and Matthew Shapiro, National Bureau of Economic Research Working Paper number 5213, August 1995.

**US individuals rejecting the move to a risky job**

(50-50 chance of doubling income, 50-50 chance cutting income by one-third)

Proportion (%) of US individuals in each group rejecting the risk

All	Males	Females	Protestant	Catholic	Jewish	Other
76.2	75.2	76.9	76.2	73.1	69.5	75.9

Source: Barsky, Kimball, Juster and Shapiro

## Newsquest boss tells Mathew Horsman about his latest coup

# Pressing on with building a regional newspaper empire

### THE MONDAY INTERVIEW

JIM BROWN

Bankers to Newsquest, the aggressive regional newspaper group, were huddled in the offices of Lazard Brothers just over a week ago, poised to complete the £300m-plus purchase of Westminster Press.

"We thought we had it, and it was just a question of closing the deal," says Jim Brown, the Scottish-born, former investigative journalist who heads the UK's largest local newspaper company. But Lazard, on behalf of the sellers, Pearson, was keeping its options open.

In a separate office several blocks away negotiators for the Mirror Group and Independent Newspapers, the rival consortium, were still in the hunt, while bankers to United News & Media, which had over tabled a formal bid for the 65 titles, were seen being shepherd into a side corridor at the Lazard City offices.

"We were shocked to realise that we still had competition," Mr Brown said in his oft-litigious offices in south London late last week, by which time Newsquest had emerged victorious.

The threat of rivals was enough to convince Mr Brown, and his key financial backers, US leveraged buyout specialists KKR and UK media investment fund CINVEN, to lift their bid from £295m to £300m and then to £305m. That clinched the deal, to Mr Brown's now evident pleasure.

The tall, personable newspaper man is an unlikely wheeler-dealer. Blunt, yet wholly affable, he has none of the conspiratorial charm that seems to characterise some in the upper echelons of media companies. Yet his knowledge of the business is encyclopaedic: he knows, it seems, everyone, and can reel off facts and figures about the regional newspaper industry virtually by title.

A well-known journalist north of the border, he started out as a junior reporter at the *Ayrshire Post*, following in the footsteps of his older brother, Ian. He rose through the ranks of Scottish journalism, including stints in Glasgow, until Thomson Newspapers gave him a management job.

Reed headbusted him 16 years ago, and there he thought he would stay; a hired hand, even if he eventually got to run the shop on behalf of the cor-

porate parent. Until a year ago, Mr Brown, then just turned 60, was contemplating retirement and "wondering what it was I was going to do with all my time". But his life changed radically when John Mellon, senior Reed executive, called him and his finance director John Pfall in one morning to announce the newspapers were to be sold as part of a radical restructuring at the Anglo-Dutch media giant.

Reed wanted high-margin, hi-tech "must-have" information assets, not local newspapers like the *Worcester Journal*, with its coverage of local flower shows and A-level results.

Shaking off the initial shock, the two men immediately said they would like to lead a management buyout team – an idea they had toyed with for years, even though they had never believed that Reed would sell its profitable chain of 125 weekly and daily newspapers and freesheets.

An auction process followed, with Mr Brown's group claiming victory with a £205m bid. "The key was KKR," Mr Brown says. "They believed in us, and we were prepared to back us fully." The US buyout company, famous for its purchase of Nabisco, has decided the regional newspaper business in the UK is a winner, and believes there is money to be made in the current wholesale consolidation, which has seen Thomson, Emap, Reed and Pearson all sell their regional titles.

Reed insisted that the name Reed be dropped, and the management team spent several months looking at likely alternatives. Mr Brown liked the name "Quest" but discovered it had already been registered. It was Mr Brown's secretary who came up with the name "Newsquest", which she shouted through the door during one of the team's many brain-storming sessions.

A bare six months later, Mr Brown and his management team, who own 12 per cent of Newsquest, were at the deal-making table again, gunning for Westminster Press.

Now that they have built a £500m company, the time has

come to consolidate, Mr Brown admits. "Some of the [Westminster] titles are in good shape," he says. "Others will require more investment."

That, by all accounts, is a polite way of saying that Pearson's management cut the company to the bone to enhance earnings in advance of a sale. There are also suggestions that some titles, notably the *Brighton Argus*, have suffered serious circulation declines.

Newsquest insiders say the cuts were indiscriminate and potentially damaging. Mr Brown, however, is polite: "We will have to move immediately to invest in the sales and marketing side, which may have been cut back too much," he says.

Other bidders for the titles were concerned that Westminster's profits, running at about £25m a year, would not be sustainable in light of the radical budget cuts.

Mr Brown disputes that: "We would not have bought them if we thought we couldn't sustain the profits," he says. "We ran all the scenarios, good and ill, and it would take an incredibly bad stroke of luck to fail."

Mr Brown believes wholeheartedly in the £2.5bn regional newspaper business, which he sees as having a bright future despite all the doom and gloom about newspaper prices, and the competitive threats from the Internet, cable television and local radio. "We have a franchise for the information in a community: an infrastructure for news and an infrastructure for advertising," he says.

But he expects that only the larger groups will be able to survive the current consolidation. "There will always be room for small newspaper companies, but the middle group will get squeezed."

That suggests Newsquest, and the other big regional players such as the Daily Mail's Northcliffe, Johnston Press, Trinity International or Midland, could end up winners in the consolidation that analysts insist is not over yet.

Indeed, Newsquest might be considered an archetype for the kind of company that can

best run local titles. Its management is wholly focused on the regional market, unlike the big, often multi-national businesses that used to dominate. It can seek cost savings by creating common back offices and sharing printing. It can make alliances with local companies – in radio, for example, or in electronic publishing – but on the level of the community rather than on a grander scale.

"Newspapers are still an important part of community life in the UK," Mr Brown says. "I can't see why that should change."



Paper chase: Jim Brown believes newspapers are still an important part of community life Photograph: Philip Meech

## Italy set to rejoin ERM

JOHN WILLCOCK

The lira, which was knocked out of the European exchange rate mechanism at the same time as sterling four years ago, is set to re-enter the ERM next year. The planned move will highlight Britain's growing isolation in the debate over monetary union.

The Italian finance minister, Carlo Azeglio Ciampi, said that the lira should be able to return to the ERM under terms outlined in 1997's budget, which will be presented next month.

"We should reasonably be able to re-enter [the ERM] as soon as we have the 1997 budget," Mr Ciampi told *La Repubblica* in an interview at the weekend.

"The ERM return is a short-

term target," he added. Next year's budget has to be presented to parliament by the end of September.

Mr Ciampi said talks with European partners on the lira's return to the currency grid had been "very positive" and indicated that further discussions would be held next month. "We have two important meetings in September. The EU finance ministers meeting and the G7," he was quoted as saying.

An informal meeting of EU finance ministers is due to be held in Dublin on 22 September. It was not immediately clear which meeting of Group of Seven leading industrialised nations Mr Ciampi was referring to.

The lira crashed out of the ERM at the height of a currency

crisis in 1992. Prime minister Romano Prodi has said he wants the lira back in the exchange system by the end of the year. Mr Ciampi told *La Repubblica* that it was important for Italy's international credibility to push the lira back into the ERM.

The euro currency is scheduled to be launched in 1999, with founder countries due to be chosen on the basis of whether they meet tough financial criteria in 1997.

According to latest government targets, Italy will fail to meet at least two of the goals laid down in the Maastricht Treaty, but Mr Ciampi suggested that European Union ministers might not stick rigidly to the treaty provisions.

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## SCIENCE

# Bugged by a critical mass

New research shows that certain bacteria behave strangely in a group. **Bernard Dixon** reports

Would you agree that bacteria are simple, senseless, essentially solitary cells which live and die alone – unlike our own cells, for example, which are enmeshed in a web of chemical communication with other tissues and organs? Like several other people, I held this view, and propounded it in many articles and books over the years. It now turns out to be fallacious.

Recent discoveries show that some bacteria, at least, live in communities where they sense the environment and the presence of their peers, and respond in a variety of ways conducive to the common good.

One means of microbial communication that is attracting keen interest among bacteriologists is called "quorum sensing". Imagine a committee of 12 smokers that meets regularly in the back room of a pub. If only four or five turn up for a meeting, they hardly notice the smoke in the air. But with seven or more present, there is soon a move to open a window; at some point the smoke will become dense enough to trigger a unanimous demand for ventilation. Whatever the committee's statutes say, it is the quorum of seven which determines what happens.

Quorum sensing by bacteria works in the same way. A few years ago, researchers found something odd about *Photobacterium fischeri*, a microbe that can emit blue-green light. It does not do so (or at best

When *P. fischeri* takes up residence in a young fish, it proliferates quickly, producing auto-inducer which soon hits the level to make the entire community begin to generate light. The bacterium gains a protected environment; the fish gains a source of light, with which it can communicate with other fish. Any bacteria that pass back into the sea soon stop luminescing, as the level of auto-inducer declines. Since generating light uses energy, the bacteria clearly benefit by not continuing when there is no longer any advantage in doing so.

The most recent example of quorum sensing, discovered by Clay Fuqua and colleagues at Cornell University, is very different – though identical in principle. They have studied *Agrobacterium tumefaciens*, which produces tumours known as crown galls on oak trees and other plants. The bacterium can do so only if it contains a tumour-inducing (Ti) plasmid – a loop of DNA – carrying the relevant genes. When the bacterium infects a plant, the genes leave the plasmid, enter the plant's chromosomes and initiate tumorous growth.

Like *P. fischeri*, *A. tumefaciens* produces an auto-inducer, whose threshold effect is to increase the rate at which the Ti plasmid spreads from one bacterium to another. Auto-inducer builds up when the bacteria are able to grow well, because they find particular nutrients in their environment. If the circumstances are favourable for the bacteria to invade the plant, it is desirable that as many members as possible are quickly armed with the plasmid.

Another example occurs in *Pseudomonas aeruginosa*, a bacterium that is often harmless but can cause serious infections in patients who are already seriously debilitated. It attacks the body by producing substances such as haemolysins, which smash open red blood cells. But the bacterium synthesises these chemical weapons only when there is a sufficiently dense population for infection to occur. Likewise, certain other microbes produce antibiotics only after their population has reached a critical size.

The big question is whether biotechnologists put this knowledge to good use. Can they design drugs to antagonise the auto-inducers that otherwise trigger haemolysin production by *P. aeruginosa*? Can pharmaceutical companies trick their bacteria into making antibiotics more readily than at present? If so, those rewards will have originated in research driven not by the hope of practical applications but by sheer curiosity.

*Dr Bernard Dixon is the author of 'Power Unseen: How Microbes Rule the World', published recently in paperback by Spektrum/WH Freeman*



Hold it right there: the press embargo was broken on NASA's 'life on Mars' story more than a week before it was due to be published in 'Science'

Photograph: AFP

# Scramble before the facts

How our thirst for news causes the 'pre-announcement' of scientific findings. By **Charles Arthur**

You were not supposed to know until next Friday that scientists at NASA thought they had found traces of past life on Mars. The announcement was meant to happen in a blaze of carefully orchestrated publicity, to coincide with the publication in the weekly journal *Science* of the researchers' carefully argued paper, "Search for Past Life on Mars: Possible Relic Biogenic Activity in Martian Meteorite ALH84001".

So why have we all heard about it already? Because of that modern phenomenon in science publishing – the irresistible thirst for news. Other examples are easy to come by: the discovery last October of the first planet orbiting a Sun-like star in the Milky Way; the recent disclosure that BSE, or mad cow disease, may be passed from mother to calf; the British government's announcement in March that a dozen recent cases of Creutzfeldt-Jakob Disease (CJD) may have been caused by BSE. In the latter two cases, a paper for a scientific journal was being prepared when the announcement was made, but neither had yet been accepted for publication.

What's wrong with that? To the general public, nothing. Certainly, the news about life on Mars has spiced up what might otherwise have been a dull week. But to many scientists, such "pre-announcements" can leave them shifting uncomfortably, especially when eager journalists call them to ask for a quote. The worry is that it undermines the scientific process, which is meant to ensure that only carefully researched work is published.

Scientists dislike commenting on work that has not been published and might still be undergoing the "peer-review" process (in which scientists in the same field read the paper to decide whether the research has been properly carried out). Certainly, in the case of BSE, passing from cow to calf, statisticians have been arguing furiously over the Government's interpretation of the figures (that it shows the chances of transmission are 1 per cent). Many disagree strongly. The final paper may offer a quite different number.

The case of "life on Mars" is slightly different: the paper had been peer-reviewed and accepted. But the way the news emerged – sparked off by a single paragraph headed "Meteorite Find Incites Speculation on Mars Life" in the technical publication *Space News* – was completely different, prompting a scramble for Mars experts, any experts, by the world's media.

"We don't necessarily like it when this happens," says Diane Dondershine, in charge of publicity for *Science*. "The process we have set up" – by which science journalists in a large number of media organisations are told, under embargo, what papers will be in *Science* the following Friday – "means reporters can do background research and all get their stories at the same time. I don't think it's the best thing that can happen if everyone's scrambling to get a story." Certainly, there have been times when pre-announcement has led to wild speculation which has later proved to be unfounded. Do the words "cold fusion" ring a bell? In March 1989, Stanley Pons and Martin

Fleischmann called a press conference in which they described benchtop experiments that were interpreted as showing fusion in a test-tube of deuterium – a "heavy" isotope of hydrogen – to create helium.

There was a paper to go with the announcement, but it had not yet been published (in the *Journal of Electrochemical Chemistry*). Fleischmann's work plan didn't intend publication until September of that year. After the press conference, which led the media to begin writing excitedly of a pollution-free power source which could be powered by seawater (which those with longer memories will recall happened in the 1950s, with the first "hot fusion" experiments), other nuclear scientists were quick to rubbish the claims. As was pointed out, if there

really had been fusion going on in those test-tubes, both experimenters would have been killed by the neutron shower released in the process. If there is one thing that scientists hate, it is thinking they have been duped. The same goes for journalists. Consequently, "cold fusion" has become the science pursuit that dare not speak its name (though it is still active, as a brief perusal of a few pages on the World Wide Web demonstrates).

"When results are released ahead of the peer-review process, it's much more dangerous both to the journal and to the whole scientific process," says Laura Garwin, physical sciences editor of *Nature*. "In the case of the 'first planet', the result was not released to the media by the researchers, but it got out." The trouble was that

their paper changed between the announcement and publication.

Of course, there is a way to ensure that everybody gets a simultaneous view of the paper: publish it on the Internet. Then everyone with a computer and telephone line can see it and judge for themselves. Let the peer review occur after publication. Paul Ginsberg, the physicist, has been quoted as saying he doesn't need peer review to tell him if a paper is good or bad, and that he sees both in peer-reviewed journals.

But although many US and British scientists do have high-speed access to the Internet, the indications are that it is not going to take the place of *Nature* or *Science* in a hurry. "The Internet has existed for a long time for physicists and astronomers," says Ms Gar-

win. "But not everybody is like Ginsberg. In a way, the Internet makes peer-reviewed journals much more valuable: there's so much information washing around, but we make it easier to deal with. Reading *Nature* means you only have to deal with a tenth, no, a hundredth, of what's out there. What we offer is quality control, now that the Internet has made 'publishing' so easy."

Dondershine echoes those views, though she notes that the global network does have its uses in a publishing crisis like last week's. "In this case it was very helpful. We were able to get the it up on our Web page, including all the visuals and the information, on Tuesday night. It made the whole process much faster than it would have been 10 years ago."

## Microbe of the Month

glows dimly) when the cell population is relatively scanty. A dense population, on the other hand, generates quite a dazzle. The surprising discovery was that the amount of light is not directly proportional to the size of the community. Instead, there is a population size – a quorum – above which all of the bacteria begin to emit much more light than they did before.

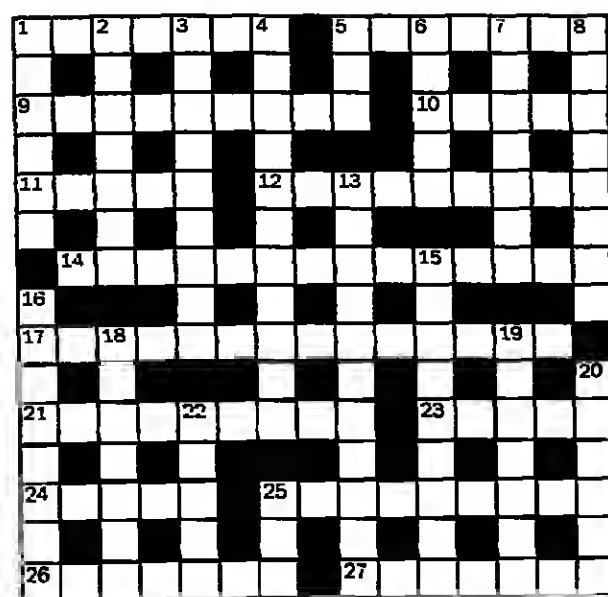
The cause is a rather neat feedback mechanism. Whether in a scanty or dense community, *P. fischeri* produces an "auto-inducer" chemical which can switch on genes in the bacterium that make it luminesce. But the auto-inducer must reach a particular level before it works. When that concentration is attained – by the right quorum of cells – then the lights go on throughout the population.

Quorum sensing by *P. fischeri* reflects its two alternative lifestyles. It can grow freely in the sea, where the density of its population is very low and where it does not luminesce. However, evolution has also produced an arrangement in which the light organs of certain squids and fishes can house the bacterium.

## THE INDEPENDENT CROSSWORD

No. 3063, Monday 12 August

By Porcia



- ACROSS**
- 1 Weary monk shows lack of interest (7)
  - 5 Stock letter (7)
  - 9 Fair game relatively speaking? (4,5)
  - 10 Film captures European geese in flight (5)
  - 11 Valve in old radio detector (5)
  - 12 Still clamour but not so much (9)
  - 14 Rest of beach trip Agnes organised (9,5)
  - 17 On the rise? (8,6)
  - 21 Device put right by army mechanic (9)
  - 23 Exclaim disapprovingly over alternative instruction book (5)
  - 24 Utopian theory based on money (5)
  - 25 Strict bachelor never stops ringing (9)
  - 26 Oriental festival ends at noon (7)
  - 27 Ten left outside always (7)

- DOWN**
- 1 Make youth leader give up booze (6)
  - 2 Bitterness private soldier expressed (7)
  - 3 Shahbiness exposed when Pole's taken in by awful couple (9)
  - 4 Call him once, being disturbed and dejected (11)
  - 5 Conservative young chap starts off shy (3)
  - 6 Gone along with English globber (5)
  - 7 Word of reassurance to South American lady (7)
  - 8 Arrive with visionary English painter (8)
  - 13 Main UN rebel upset very many (11)
  - 15 Advance on position, gaining ground (9)
  - 16 Ignore note in a stupid mix-up (3,5)
  - 18 They are funny about girl who dries up (7)
  - 19 Left before time beset by bird-like foreigner (7)
  - 20 Sparing female runner to accompany a novice (6)
  - 22 Following a number of directions that prove misleading (5)
  - 25 Vessel of merit by the sound of it (3)

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